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by M. HEERMA VAN VOSS, E. J. SHARPE, R. J. Z. WERBLOWSKY

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EDITORS' PAGE

NUMEN is entering on its second year under the new Editorial Board. The first year has been a running-in period. We were *en rodage*, as it were, but we hope to have maintained the standards and the variety of interests expected by the IAHR from its official journal, and to have served the interests of the International Association by the new features that we introduced. *NUMEN* has also carried far more bookreviews than might appear from a cursory glance at the table of contents, since some more important or otherwise interesting publications were reviewed in the form of full-length articles.

As announced in our last fascicle (*NUMEN* xxv, p. 3 of cover), the journal will henceforth appear in two issues per year. The number of pages will remain the same, but rising costs and the desire not to raise the subscription rates even more, suggested this change which should result in substantial saving in such matters as binding and postage.

The end of 1978 brought several grievous losses to the community of students of religion. The Obituary pages will mention some of them. At the same time 1978 saw the birth or further development of new societies, journals and projects relevant to the study of religions. We hope to draw attention to these (to the extent that they are brought to our notice) in the "Chronicle" section. We appeal once more to members of the IAHR and others to supply us with the relevant information. Would-be contributors are requested once more to conform strictly to the conventions of the journal when submitting manuscripts.

THE EDITORS

THE MEANINGLESSNESS OF RITUAL

FRITS STAAL

svarge'pi pipilikāḥ santi
"even in heaven there are ants"

Sanskrit Proverb

The Agnicayana, a 3000-year-old Vedic ritual, was performed in 1975 in a village in southwest India by Nambudiri brahmins. This event, which lasted twelve days, was filmed, photographed, recorded and extensively documented. From twenty hours of rough footage, Robert Gardner and I produced a 45-minute film, "Altar of Fire." Two records are planned with selections from the eighty hours of recorded recitation and chant. Photographs of the ceremonies were taken by Adelaide de Menil. In collaboration with the chief Nambudiri ritualists and other scholars, I am preparing a definite account of the ceremonies, which will appear in two illustrated volumes entitled: "Agni — The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar."

I shall here be concerned not with empirical description, but with theoretical implications. Vedic ritual is not only the oldest surviving ritual of mankind; it also provides the best source material for a theory of ritual. This is not because it is close to any alleged "original" ritual. Vedic ritual is not primitive and not an *Ur*-ritual. It is sophisticated and already the product of a long development. But it is the largest, most elaborate and (on account of the Sanskrit manuals) best documented among the rituals of man. Hubert and Mauss, who noted these facts in 1909, used the Vedic animal sacrifice as source material for the construction of a ritual paradigm ("un schème abstrait du sacrifice").¹ However, they did not know that these rituals are still performed, so that many data were inaccessible to them. I shall use data from the 1975 performance and textual material from Sanskrit manuals, in particular the *śrauta sūtras*, a literature exclusively devoted to ritual which dates from the eighth through fourth centuries B.C.

¹ H. Hubert and M. Mauss, "Essai sur la nature et la fonction du sacrifice," *Mélanges d'histoire et des religions*, 1909, page 22.

I

A widespread but erroneous assumption about ritual is that it consists in symbolic activities which refer to something else. It is characteristic of a ritual performance, however, that it is self-contained and self-absorbed. The performers are totally immersed in the proper execution of their complex tasks. Isolated in their sacred enclosure, they concentrate on correctness of act, recitation and chant. Their primary concern, if not obsession, is with rules. There are no symbolic meanings going through their minds when they are engaged in performing ritual.

Such absorption, by itself, does not show that ritual cannot have a symbolic meaning. However, also when we ask a brahmin explicitly why the rituals are performed, we never receive an answer which refers to symbolic activity. There are numerous different answers, such as: we do it because our ancestors did it; because we are eligible to do it; because it is good for society; because it is good; because it is our duty; because it is said to lead to immortality; because it leads to immortality. A visitor will furthermore observe that a person who has performed a Vedic ritual acquires social and religious status, which involves other benefits, some of them economic. Beyond such generalities one gets involved in individual case histories. Some boys have never been given much of a choice, and have been taught recitations and rites as a matter of fact; by the time they have mastered these, there is little else they are competent or motivated to do. Others are inspired by a spirit of competition. The majority would not be able to come up with an adequate answer to the question why they engage in ritual. But neither would I, if someone were to ask me why I am writing about it.

Why ask such personal questions? It might be more proper and fruitful to ask specific questions about the meaning of particular rites. Some such questions do receive specific answers, on which participants and scholars generally agree. The Yajamāna, or Patron of the ritual, must keep his hands closed "like a child in the womb of its mother, ready to be reborn." The fire altar has the shape of a bird because fire, as well as Soma, were fetched from heaven by a bird. The priests do not go south if they can help it for the southern direction is inauspicious. Certain bricks of the altar are consecrated so that it may rain.

Such simple answers form a small minority. They are given rarely, and only in reply to similarly simple questions. Most questions concerning ritual detail involve numerous complex rules, and no participant could provide an answer or elucidation with which he would himself be satisfied. Outsiders and bystanders may volunteer their ideas about religion and philosophy generally — without reference to any specific question. In most cases such people are Hindus who do not know anything about Vedic ritual. There is only one answer which the best and most reliable among the ritualists themselves give consistently and with more than average frequency: we act according to the rules because this is our tradition (*parampara*). The effective part of the answer seems to be: look and listen, these are our activities! To performing ritualists, rituals are to a large extent like dance, of which Isadora Duncan said: "If I could tell you what it meant there would be no point in dancing it."

Ritual, then, is primarily activity. It is an activity governed by explicit rules. The important thing is what you do, not what you think, believe or say. In India this has become a basic feature of all religion, so that we should refer, not to the faithful or orthodox, but to the orthoprax (from Greek *orthos*, "right" and *praxis*, "action"). It is precisely this feature which is least understood by English-writing Indian authors such as V. S. Naipaul and N. C. Chaudhuri, who have recently taken on the role of explaining India to Western intelligentsia.

II

If we wish to know the meaning or theory of ritual, we should not confine ourselves to practising ritualists; we have learned, after all, that it does not pay to ask elephants about zoology, or artists about the theory of art. Before asking anyone else, however, let us take a look at what the Indian tradition itself has to offer. Since in India ritual has always been a favorite topic for speculation, there is an abundance of material. Even prior to speculation we find suggestive ideas. In the earliest Vedic literature, rituals, along with metres and chants, are used by gods and demons to fight and conquer each other, and sometimes to create worlds. Even when the aims are not explicit, gods and demons are frequently depicted as engaged in ritual. Commentaries provide rituals with a great variety of interpretations, sometimes inconsistent with each other.

In due course specific rites came to be prescribed to fulfil specific desires: for health, power, offspring, victory, heaven, and the like. The list of wishes and desires is not so very different from that of modern man. It is certainly not exclusively spiritual, as some modern visionaries have claimed. But this trend receded again into the background. With increasing systematization of the ritual, we witness a codification of two kinds of rites: the *grhya* or domestic rites, which are "rites de passage," life-cycle rites or sacraments, accompanying such events as birth, initiation, marriage and death; and the *śrauta* rites, "rites solennels," or traditional rites. There are several general and formal differences between these two kinds of ritual. For example, the traditional rites require three fire altars and the services of several priests, whereas the domestic rites require only one fire (the domestic fire) and one priest (the domestic priest). While the function of the domestic rites appears to be fairly straightforward, the significance of the traditional rites is not obvious. The traditional ritual, with its myriad ramifications, exhibits the unhampered development of ritual construction and creativity. It is therefore more important for the understanding of ritual than the domestic rites. The latter, by themselves, might seem to be amenable to explanations along the lines of, e.g., Van Gennep's *Rites de passage* (1909). But since such explanations are clearly inapplicable to the traditional rites, and domestic and traditional rites are partly similar in structure, it follows that all such theories are inappropriate. There are, moreover, traditional rituals which last a thousand years, which shows that some of the rites were purely theoretical. Such theoretical constructs (which the grammarian Patañjali compared to the infinite uses of language) should not be brushed aside, as was done by Hillebrandt, who referred in this connection, to "myth and fantasy" of the ritualists.² On the contrary, they are as important for the theory of ritual as are concrete ceremonies. Many rites have in fact an intermediate status. The Agnicayana, which was performed in 1975, is a traditional ritual which seems to have been always "real", though some of its extensions, which the texts describe, smack of theory.

The *śrauta sūtras* of the late Vedic period offer several definitions of ritual. One which is often quoted characterizes it as comprising

² A. Hillebrandt, *Ritual-Literatur, Vedische Opfer und Zauber*, Strassburg 1897, page 158.

three things: *dravya*, "the substance (which is used in oblations)"; *devatā*, "the deity (to which oblations are offered)"; and *tyāgā*, "renunciation (of the fruits of the ritual acts)". The *tyāgā* is a formula pronounced by the Patron at the culmination of each act of oblation. When the officiating priest, on behalf of the Patron, makes the oblation into the fire for one of the gods, for example Agni, the Patron says:

"this is for Agni, not for me" (*agnaye idaṃ na mama*).

At this point a contradiction begins to appear, which becomes increasingly explicit in the ritualistic philosophy of the Mīmāṃsā. The reason for performing a specific ritual is stated to be the desire for a particular fruit or effect. The stock example of the Mīmāṃsā is:

"he who desires heaven shall sacrifice with the Agniṣṭoma ritual" (*agniṣṭomena svargakāmo yajeta*).

But this fruit is renounced whenever the Patron utters his *tyāga* formula of renunciation. The effect, therefore, is not obtained.

The resulting picture is further complicated by another apparent contradiction. The rites are subdivided into two classes: "obligatory," (*nitya*) and "optional" (*kāmya*). Unlike the Agnicayana, which is *kāmya*, the Agniṣṭoma is a *nitya* rite: every brahman has the duty to perform it. So here is a ritual which appears to be optional, since it is confined to those who desire heaven (nobody's duty); but which is also not optional, because it is a prescribed duty; and which moreover in the final resort does not bear any fruit because its fruits are abandoned. The texts reflect such contradictions. The Mīmāṃsā Sūtra, basic manual of the Mīmāṃsā, lays down that the rites lead to happiness, but the subcommentary "Straight Spotless" (*Ṛjuvimalā*) observes that this does not apply to obligatory acts.

The Mīmāṃsā philosophers faced another difficulty. When a ritual performance is completed, no fruit is seen. The Yajamāna, on whose behalf the rites have been performed, does not raise up and go to heaven. Rather the opposite: he returns home and is, as the texts put it, the same as he was before. In particular, he must continue to perform the morning and evening fire rites (*agnihotra*) for the rest of his life. The Mīmāṃsā concluded, quite logically, that the fruit of ritual activity is — temporarily — unseen. It will become apparent only later, e.g., after death. An elaborate theory was devised to show

that this is in accordance with the mechanism of *karman*, according to which every cause has an effect. A special logical theorem, called *arthāpatti*, was invented in support of this theory. The followers of the Mīmāṃsā were criticized by others (e.g., the philosophers of the Advaita Vedānta) for postulating such unseen effects. For whatever our contemporary fads may suggest — in India, the unseen is resorted to only under duress. What the Mīmāṃsā in fact ended up teaching is that the rituals have to be performed for their own sake.

The notion of *tyāga*, “renunciation,” has attained an important position in Hinduism through the teachings of the Bhagavad Gītā. Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa advocates as the highest goal of life a mode of activity, in which acts are performed as usual, but the fruit (*phala*) of action (*karman*) is always renounced (*karma-phala-tyāga*).

III

The Indian tradition offers suggestive speculations but it does not seem to come up with a single consistent theory of ritual. The most interesting Indian contribution is perhaps the term *karman* itself: originally and primarily used for ritual and similarly pure or ideal activity, it comes by extension to denote any kind of human activity. Now let us see what modern scholars have to offer. For a long time it has been fashionable to believe that rites re-enact myths. This idea was partly inspired by the Babylonian festival of the New Year, which involves a recital of the myth of creation. But this hypothesis is difficult to support and creates an unsolved problem: why should anybody wish to re-enact a myth? The same difficulty applies to several more recent theories, according to which ritual reflects social structure. It is true, again, that there are some remarkable parallels which require explanation. But the question remains: why should social structures be represented or enacted ritually, and in a very roundabout manner at that? Such unanswered questions, generated by the theory, suggest that theories of this type are best abandoned.

A related theory, current among anthropologists, is that rituals are used, in preliterate societies, to transmit “cultural and social values” to the younger generation. This would explain the informants’ emphasis on tradition. But the assumption is, of course, unnecessary. Not only are rituals not confined to preliterate societies (it is anthropologists who tend to confine themselves to preliterate societies); but such

values (e.g., gods, myths, kinship systems) are most readily transmitted by grandmothers and through language, and there is no need for them to be transmitted again by other means. The only cultural values rituals transmit are rituals.

Another widespread theory is that ritual effects a transition from the realm of the profane to that of the sacred. (Instead of "transition" we also meet with "communication": a weaker version of the theory.) This is very intriguing and unclear. Terms such as "transition" or "communication" do not pose too much of a problem; but "sacred" and "profane" certainly do. Either the theory expresses a tautology: the distinction between profane and sacred is the distinction between the status of a person or object before and after a relevant ritual is embarked upon; accordingly, if sacred and profane have been defined in terms of ritual, ritual cannot be defined in terms of sacred and profane. This is circular and uninformative.

On another interpretation, this theory would assume that the distinction between sacred and profane is already established and known from elsewhere. For example, in the realm of divinity, "sacred" might have been shown to be the domain of the gods, and "profane" that of men. But a satisfactory distinction of this kind is not easily found, especially outside the realm of ritual. Moreover, the terms do not introduce anything new. The theory would merely claim that ritual effects a transition from the realm of men to that of the gods (or a communication between the two). As a matter of fact, the Vedic ritual offers an immediate contradiction. During the Soma rituals, a transition is effected from the "Old Hall," (*prācīnavamśa*) to the "Great Altar" (*mahā-vedi*). The former is said to be the abode of men, and the latter that of the gods. Thus a transition from the domain of men to that of the gods is effected *within* the ritual. The distinction therefore cannot serve as a concept in terms of which the ritual itself may be defined.

IV

Why has it proved so difficult to define the meaning, goals and aims of ritual? Why are there so many different answers and theories, not only often contradictory between themselves, but of such disparate character that it is difficult to even compare them with each other? There is one simple hypothesis which would account for all these puzzling facts: the hypothesis that ritual has no meaning, goal or aim.

This is precisely what I suspect to be the case. Ritual is pure activity, without meaning or goal. Let me briefly digress for a point of terminology. Things are either for their own sake, or for the sake of something else. If I were defending the view that ritual is for something else, it would be necessary to distinguish between such other things as meaning, function, aim or goal. But since my view is that ritual is for its own sake, I shall not bother about these differences. To say that ritual is for its own sake is to say that it is meaningless, without function, aim or goal, or also that it constitutes its own aim or goal. It does not follow that it has no value: but whatever value it has is intrinsic value.

Ritual exhibits its character of pure activity most readily when it is contrasted with the applied activities of our ordinary, everyday life. In ritual activity, the rules count, but not the result. In ordinary activity it is the other way around. In Vedic ritual, for example, an important ceremony is *agniṣraṇayana*, "transporting the fire (from the Old to the New Altar)." This is in fact a transition from the abode of men to that of the gods. But the priests do not first think of men and then meditate on the gods. They think of neither, at any time. What is essential in the ceremony is the precise and faultless execution, in accordance with rules, of numerous rites and recitations. The result is important, but it has only ritual use and can only be reached in the ritually prescribed manner. I could not come in and assist in the proceedings by picking up the fire from the Old Altar and depositing it on the New. In fact, if I did such a horrible thing, the entire ceremony would be desecrated, interrupted, and expiation rites would have to be performed. Similar disasters would result if anyone used the sacred fire for any but a ritual purpose, e.g., to heat water for tea.

Now contrast this with an ordinary activity. I am about to transport my suitcase from my house to the bus stop, which is about a mile away. There are no rules I have to follow, provided I obtain the desired effect. I may put my suitcase on a skate board. Or my brother may appear on a bicycle, and the two of us use this vehicle to transport my suitcase to its intended destination.

The two kinds of activity, ritual and ordinary, can be juxtaposed without conflict or contradiction. After making fire for the altar in the ritually prescribed manner by rubbing two pieces of wood together, a priest leaves the sacred enclosure and lights a cigarette with a match.

Not so different, actually, from Arthur Rubinstein back home after a concert, putting on a gramophone record. But the two domains should not be mixed. If a priest would light a cigarette from the sacrificial fire, it would be bad. If he would light a cigarette from fire which he had produced by rubbing two pieces of wood together in the ritual manner, he would be considered mad or very eccentric. The ritual and ordinary ways of making fire are neatly demarcated.

A distinctive feature of ordinary activity is that it runs risks which ritual activity avoids. In ordinary activity, the entire performance may fail to have the desired effect. The bicycle together with its load may fall into a canal, or the suitcase may be seized by armed robbers. In ritual activity, the activity itself is all that counts. Not only have we established the rules ourselves, so that we are completely in control; we are also assured of success. If one rite goes wrong, another takes its place. This goes a long way to explain the curious fact that rituals, so apparently meaningless and useless, are at the same time readily engaged in. *Eo ipso* it explains that ritual activity has a pleasant, soothing effect. If you give up desire, you will be happy. This idea and the notion that ritual is performed for its own sake are closely connected and clearly foreshadowed by the Indian doctrine of *tyāga*, the teachings of the Bhagavad Gītā, and by similar notions in other traditions, e.g., *wu-wei*, "absence of (effective) action" in Taoism, or the categorical imperative in Kant. It also accounts for the similarity between rites and games, which are equally unproductive, as Huizinga and Caillois have pointed out. But ritual is one up on most games because you cannot even lose.

Several anthropologists have detected features of meaningless in ritual, without recognizing that these features express its essence. Lévi-Strauss says that ritual "consists of utterances, gestures and manipulations of objects which are independent of the interpretations which are proper to these modes of activity and which result not from the ritual itself but from implicit mythology" (*L'homme nu*, 1971, page 600). If we remove the word "implicit" from this sentence (which means forsaking the author's ideas about the complementarity of myth and ritual) we approximate what I believe to be the correct theory. Van Gennep came close to the idea that ritual is meaningless. After completing his *Rites de passage*, he noted that marriage ceremonies, in many societies, include an aspersion rite which he inter-

puted as a fecundity rite. But identical aspersion rites are employed, in the same and in different societies, when a slave is acquired, when a new ambassador arrives in town, to make rain or to expel someone. Like Indian commentators, Van Gennep gave different interpretations to each of these rites. He concluded: "the aspersion rite does not have any personal or basic meaning in the state of isolation, but it is meaningful if seen as a component part of a particular ceremony. The meaning of the rite can, consequently, only be found by determining the relation it has with the other elements of the whole ceremony."³

Aspersion rites are not confined to humans. In his Sather lectures at Berkeley, Walter Burkert dealt with the ritual pouring of liquids for marking a territory and observed that this is quite common in mammals: "we all know the dog's behavior at the stone." — In the development of our concepts and theories of ritual it is only a small step from "changing meaning" to: "no intrinsic meaning" and „structural meaning," and from there to: "no meaning."

If ritual is useless this does not imply that it may not have useful side-effects. It is obvious, for example, that ritual creates a bond between the participants, reinforces solidarity, boosts morale and constitutes a link with the ancestors. So do many other institutions and customs. Such side-effects cannot be used to explain the origin of ritual, though they may help to explain its preservation. They explain why rituals are preserved though their meaninglessness is recognized, like the Jewish ritual of the Red Heifer which baffled even Solomon and which was considered the classic example of a divine command for which no rational explanation can be adduced.

These side-effects fail to explain the most curious fact about ritual preservation: rituals are always guarded jealously and with extreme conservatism. This is directly explained by the theory that ritual has no meaning. A useful institution is open; it may undergo change, because efforts are made to render it more (or less) useful. A useless institution is closed; it is not understood and therefore can only be abandoned or preserved. There are parallels to this situation from

³ "De la méthode à suivre dans l'étude des rites et des mythes," *Revue de l'université de Bruxelles*, 1911, pages 505-23; English translation in J. Waardenburg (ed.), *Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion*, The Hague-Paris 1973, I, page 299.

outside the realm of ritual. In India, during the last 3000 years, the Vedic language gave way to classical Sanskrit which was in due course replaced by Middle and Modern Indo-Aryan languages. During all these changes the Vedic mantras were orally transmitted without any change. Why? Because they had become meaningless. Languages change because they express meaning, are functional and constantly used. Meaningless sounds do not change; they can only be remembered or forgotten.

Freud has drawn attention to similarities between ritual and neurosis. The obsessiveness which pervades ritual has led several anthropologists to emphasize the emotions and anxiety which sometimes accompany ritual, and which they claim underlie it. In *L'homme nu*, Lévi-Strauss has located such anxiety in the ritualists' fear that reality, which they have cut up ritually, cannot be put together again. But it is apparent that the obsessiveness of ritual is also an immediate consequence of its meaninglessness. Nothing is more conducive to uneasiness than to be entrapped in absurdity. If I detect a mistake in cooking or calculating, I perceive the result and understand the reason. But if I have made a ritual mistake, I don't notice any difference and don't see any reason. I am not even sure whether I made a mistake or not, and there is no way to determine it. It is like being in a foreign culture where strange things happen and it is not clear whether one has made a *faux pas*. The Agnicayana performance of 1975 was followed by a long series of expiation rites, for mistakes that might have been committed. Our anxiety is greatest when we don't know why we are anxious.

The meaninglessness of ritual explains the variety of meanings attached to it. It could not be otherwise. Ideal activity cannot fail to resemble actual activity. Therefore rituals resemble other things, including features of myth and social structure. However, though a ritual activity may resemble a meaningful non-ritual activity, this does not imply that it must itself be meaningful. This can be seen in the realm of animal ritualization, as well as in the human domain. Among animals, ritualization often implies that the goal of an activity has changed. Many ritual displays incorporate modes of action which originally had a different function, e.g., fighting. Such ritual displays may acquire a new function: they lead to copulation because they are sexually stimulating, for example. Some of the same ritual displays, however, are post-nuptial or post-reproductive, and therefore not clearly func-

tional. Biologists find them puzzling (e.g., Huxley⁴).

Human ritualization often follows animal ritualization rather closely. Fighting, simulated or real, is still sexually stimulating among humans. But typical human forms of ritualization seem in general to dissolve meaning, not replace it. One of the earliest rituals originated in connection with the use of fire. During most of its existence, mankind did not know how to use it. Subsequently, more than 250,000 years ago, man learned the use of fire; but he could not make it. So fire was collected from natural conflagrations and was carefully kept and carried around. Elaborate techniques were devised for the preservation of fire. Finally, more than 50,000 years ago, man learned how to make fire. At this point ritualization and the cult of fire came into being. For instead of relying on his art of making fire, and producing it whenever he needed it (which is easy at least during a dry season or in a dry climate), man continued to carry fire around. A distinction was made between such "eternal" fire and the "new" fire which could now be made—a distinction we have since abandoned as irrational. To ancient man, and in several existing societies, fires have retained individuality. They should not be mixed. Fires have to be extinguished, or newly made, at set times by ritual experts. Alongside, the continued preservation of "eternal" fire reflects fossilized habits which had lasted some 200,000 years.

A more recent example comes from the Agnicayana.⁵ During the ceremony of *agnipranayana*, when fire is transported from the Old to the New Altar, one of the priests engages in a long recitation. The recitation is of an ancient battle hymn, the Apratiratha or "Song to the Irresistible Warrior" (Taittiriya Saṃhitā 4.6.4, cf. Ṛgveda 10.103 and 6.75). Indra is invoked as a victorious warrior or hero, "fond of slaughter, disturber of peoples", who with the help of his arrows, chariots and troupes, destroys the enemies. When the priest recites: "Comrades, follow in Indra's footsteps!", he sounds less like an officiating priest than like a gang leader or a commander-in-chief. And what is the origin of all of this? At an earlier period, the Vedic Aryans fought their way into the Indian subcontinent, moving from west to east and

⁴ J. Huxley (ed.), "A Discussion on Ritualization of Behavior in Animals and Man," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, 1966, Series B, No. 772, Vol. 251, page 254.

⁵ Cf. J. C. Heesterman, "Vrātya and Sacrifice," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 6, 1962, pages 34-36.

carrying fire. In the *agnipramayana* rite, fire is still carried from west to east. But the priests are not celebrating the ancient raids of their ancestors, of which they need not even be aware. The function of the hymn has not changed. It has become ritual, i.e., disappeared.

Can the hypothesis of the meaninglessness of ritual be formulated in terms of evolution or development? Necessarily so, but we have to speculate back to the origin of man. Philosophers, especially in Germany, have made much of self-consciousness as a characteristic of man, but we are rarely told what this means. I think that man became aware of himself primarily as an agent. Like many other animals, he was already aware of the outside world and could communicate to a limited extent with other members of the species (which does not imply that he possessed language). Abandoning a sense of being pushed around, man made the discovery that he affected the outside world by engaging in activity—a pursuit wrought with risk and danger. So he created a world of ritual or ideal activity, intrinsically successful and free from such contingencies. It expressed man's awareness of himself, and paved the way for theory construction and language, as we shall see. Much later, when ritual was contrasted with ordinary, everyday activity, its meaninglessness became patent and various rationalizations and explanations were constructed. Ritual became deeply involved with religion, which always stands in need of the mysterious and unexplained. Rites were attached to all important events. In the course of time rituals, instead of remaining useless and pure, became useful and meritorious.

Throughout the history of man's speculation on ritual we find inklings of its original function as perfect activity. Just as the Indians mused about *śrauta* rituals, the Chinese theorized about *li*, which means: rites, ceremonies, rules of good manners and proper conduct, etiquette. The Confucian philosopher Hsün Tzū (third century B.C.) explained the origin of the *li* as follows:

Man at birth has desires. When these desires are not satisfied, he cannot remain without seeking their satisfaction. When this seeking for satisfaction is without measure or limit, there can only be contention. When there is contention, there will be disorder; when there is disorder, everything will be destroyed. The early kings hated this disorder, and so they established the *li* and standards of justice so as to set limits to this confusion, to satisfy men's desires, and give opportunity to this satisfaction, in order that desires should not be stretched to the breaking point by things, nor things be used

up by desires; that both these two should mutually support one another and so continue to exist. This is how the *li* originated.⁶

V

Enough of generalities. If ritual consists in the precise execution of rules, it must be possible to know what its rules are. The rules of the *śrauta* ritual have been formulated with great care in the *śrauta sūtras*, and made accessible by Sanskrit scholars, foremost among them Willem Caland. Searching for the best literature outside the Vedic, one soon finds out that there is no literature at all. Lévi-Strauss, in *L'homme nu* (pages 601-603), distinguishes two basic ritual operations: "morcellement" (dismemberment, fragmentation) and repetition. But he offers no actual rules. Hubert and Mauss showed little more than that rites have a beginning, a middle and an end. Scholars and students of ritual seem to lag behind their colleagues who study the rules of measurement, counting or language, and who have for millenia been familiar with some of the rules which obtain in their respective domains. Among students of ritual — whether religiously, anthropologically or psychologically inspired — we mostly meet with generalities. The reason for this neglect is rooted in the nature of ritual itself: if a thing is useless, it is not taken seriously. Thus we do not possess much in the way of a science of ritual, even though the subject is certainly amenable to precise investigation, not unlike physics, mathematics or grammar.

Even at this early stage of pre-scientific groping, in which we find ourselves, it is not impossible to formulate ritual rules. I shall give a few examples from Vedic ritual. This will necessarily involve some detail (for more, see Staal, forthcoming⁷). We must start with the observation that the *śrauta* rituals constitute a hierarchy. Four of them, for example, which I shall refer to by capital letters, are listed in the following order:

- D: "Full and New Moon ceremonies" (*darśapūrṇamāsa*)
- P: "Animal Sacrifice" (*paśubandha*)
- A: "Praise of Agni" (*agniṣṭoma*, paradigm of the Soma rituals)
- C: "Piling of Agni" (*agnicayana*).

⁶ Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, transl. Derk Bodde, Princeton 1952, I, page 297.

⁷ "Ritual Syntax," *Sanskrit and Indian Studies. Essays in Honor of Daniel H. H. Ingalls*; "Ritual Structure," *Agni. The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*, volume II.

This sequence is not arbitrary. There is increasing complexity. A person is in general only eligible to perform a later ritual in the sequence, if he has already performed the earlier ones. Each later ritual presupposes the former and incorporates one or more occurrences of one or more of the former rituals. Sometimes these embedded rituals are abbreviated. In general, they undergo modifications. We find the following embeddings, among others:

- In P, performances of D are embedded when a cake of eight potsherds is offered to Agni and when a cake of eleven potsherds is offered to Agni-Viṣṇu;
- in A are embedded: two performances of P (for Agni-Soma and for Pressing Soma) and several performances of D (called Consecration, Going Forth, Final Bath, Conclusion and Departure, etc., not to mention performances of D embedded in P);
- in C, a performance of A, fourteen performances of P and numerous performances of D, some already embedded in A and P, are embedded.

This enumeration is by no means complete, but it may serve to illustrate the "embedding" feature of the underlying structure.

Now for the modifications which rituals undergo when they are embedded, and, more generally, in different contexts. First of all, the deities to which rites on different occasions are dedicated are often different, which induces differences at least in the names which occur in many of the recitations. Even within D itself, one of the main oblations is for Agni-Soma at full moon, but for Indra-Agni at new moon. Similarly, the different deities to which the different animals in performances of P are dedicated, induce differences in recitation. But apart from these substitutions there are numerous more complex modifications which are induced by embedding. I shall give one simple example. In the regular performance of D, there are *fifteen sāmīdhenī* verses, recited when the twigs of firewood are put on the fire. But at the performance of D which is embedded in P when a cake on eleven potsherds is offered to Agni-Viṣṇu, there are *seventeen sāmīdhenī* verses. Such examples can be multiplied almost indefinitely.

Though all these rituals involve embeddings and modifications, it does not follow that there is a unique description in terms of these for each particular ritual. For example, C may be analysed differently as

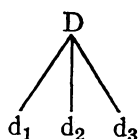
an Atirātra, viz., a modification of A, in which the construction of the New Altar is modified. Such an alternative analysis would necessitate a different structural analysis; what is important in the present context is only that it would involve embeddings and modifications.

In order to get an inkling of the syntax of these structures, we have had to enter into some complexity even though I have made several simplifications. In order to explicate the rules, I shall have to simplify differently and construct a model of a ritual — a more formal representation corresponding to what Hubert and Mauss called a “schème abstrait du sacrifice.” In order to make this precise, a series of artificial assumptions will be made, defining D, P and A. The reason for these artificial assumptions and definitions is merely that they constitute a model which exhibits specific structures and rules of the ritual. This model is similar with respect to these structures to the really existing rituals, but is much less elaborate than the latter. What is important is that the existing rituals can be analysed in the same manner as the model with regard to the structures in which we are here interested.

Let us assume that a *ritual* consists of smaller units, which I shall call *rites*. The rites of ritual “D” will be written as “d,” those of “P” as “p,” etc. Now let us make more specific assumptions. Let D consist of three rites, d_1 , d_2 and d_3 . I shall write this as a rule:

$$D \rightarrow d_1 d_2 d_3. \quad (1)$$

This may be illustrated as in Figure 1:



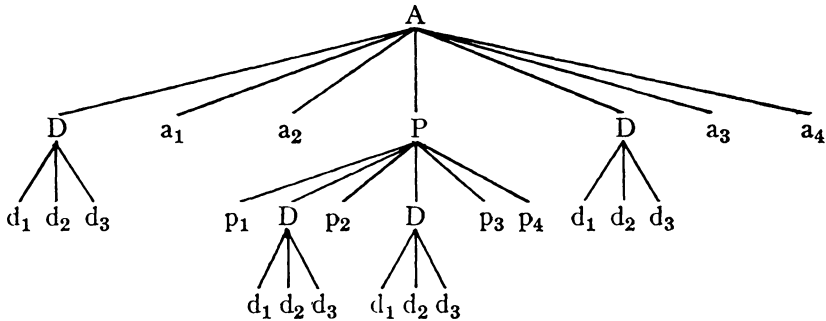
Ritual P involves several performances of D. Let us assume:

$$P \rightarrow p_1 D p_2 D p_3 p_4. \quad (2)$$

Similarly, A involves performances of P, as well as of D directly, e.g.:

$$A \rightarrow D a_1 a_2 P D a_3 a_4. \quad (3)$$

A representation of the structure of (3) is given in Figure 2:

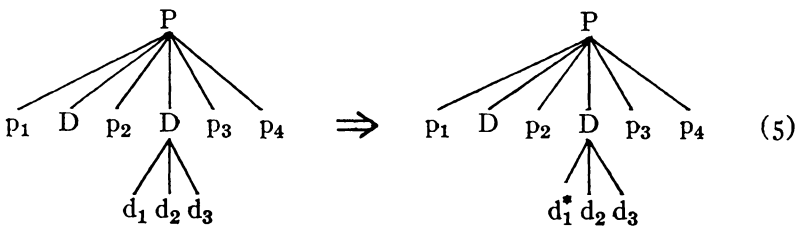


This picture does not correspond to any existing ritual. However, it expresses, precisely, one of the main features of ritual structure, which I have referred to as *embedding*.

We have already met with a second structure: rituals which are embedded undergo *modification*. We may introduce the example I gave into our model by assuming that in ritual D, the first rite, d_1 , represents the recitation of fifteen *sāmidhenī* verses. Let us further assume that in the second occurrence of D in P, rite d_1 has to be replaced by a rite d_1^* , in which seventeen *sāmidhenī* verses are recited. We cannot simply represent this transformation by adding an expression:

$$d_1 \rightarrow d_1^* \quad (4)$$

for the effect of this would be that all occurrences of d_1 are replaced by occurrences of d_1^* . What we must do is, replace by d_1^* only the d_1 in the second occurrence of D in P. This can be done by introducing a different kind of rule which can be effected by means of an expression which uses a different symbol instead of the single arrow \rightarrow , for example a double arrow \Rightarrow . We have to represent the entire configuration in which d_1 occurs since it is not otherwise possible to single out the d_1 we wish to single out. This can be done as follows:



Again, this rule does not correspond to any actual rule, but it expresses, precisely, the feature of ritual structure which I have referred to as *modification*. In the forthcoming article on "Ritual Syntax" I have shown that there are also other types of ritual rules than those which exhibit embedding and modification.

IV

No linguist will have failed to observe the similarity of these ritual rules with the rules of syntax. The single arrow rules which pertain to ritual embedding correspond to the phrase structure rules of syntax; the double arrow rules which pertain to ritual modification correspond to its transformational rules. This correspondence is not due to the fact that I selected ritual rules which appear to resemble syntactic rules. The rules of embedding and modification are in fact very basic rules of ritual, or at least of Vedic ritual.

The partial similarity between ritual and syntax could mean that ritualists follow, albeit unconsciously, the rules of syntax which they had internalized when they learned their native language. I am inclined to the opposite view: syntax comes from ritual. A simple consideration in support of this idea is that animals have ritual, but not language. But there are weightier considerations. Syntax is the part of language which stands most in need of explanation. Language relates sounds to meanings, and so it must necessarily comprise a domain of sounds (studied in phonetics and phonology) and a domain of meanings (studied in semantics). If language were rational and adapted to its purpose, sounds and meanings would be related by means of a 1-1 correspondance. If this were true of natural languages, assuming semantics to be universal, different natural languages would also stand to each other in a 1-1 correspondance, and translation could be effected with the help of dictionaries only. There would be no need for artificial languages, and logicians would be out of business.

What we do find in language is something different. Meanings and sounds are related to each other through a vast and complicated domain of structured rules: syntax. The transition between sound and meaning is unnecessarily complex, roundabout and mathematically absurd. "Nobody in his right mind would attempt to build an artificial language based on phrase structure plus transformations"

(J. A. Fodor⁸). How are we to explain such apparent redundancies? It is not enough to say, as communication theorists might, that redundancies are necessary for communication because they decrease mistakes in reception. That assumes that language is only for the sake of communication, which it is not. More importantly, such redundancies, to perform their alleged function, merely need be random: which cannot explain syntax, a structured domain of specific rules which in fact makes language unlogical and inefficient. These specific rules, which are without rhyme or reason, must come from elsewhere. They look like a rudiment of something quite different. The similarity between syntax and ritual suggests that the origin of syntax is ritual.

The ritual origin of syntax has implications not only in language but also in religion. I shall mention three. Ritual is replete with language, but it is very often meaningless language. When a small golden image of a man is buried under the fire altar of the Agnicayana, the Chief Priest of the Sāmaveda chants songs which contain such sounds as:

kā hvā hvā hvā hvā hvā
 phal phal phal phal phal
 hau hau hau hau hau
 bham bham... (eighteen times).

Such structured sounds partake of the syntax of ritual, but do not relate to meaning. This applies to most mantras. Originally, language was born when such structured sounds were connected with meaning. The state immediately preceding language survives in religion as mantras and magical spells: *abracadabra*. Unlike language, these are universal and need no translation. The abundance of such formulas in Buddhism facilitated its introduction into China, where their way was paved by the sacred noises of popular Taoism.

A second feature is that mysticism is characterized by the absence of language. It points to a pre-linguistic state which can be induced by ritual, by recitation, by silent meditation on mantras, or by other means, as I have shown in *Exploring Mysticism*. All these methods help to eliminate meaning, sound and (ritual) structure.

⁸ In: F. Smith and G. A. Miller (eds), *The Genesis of Language: A Psycholinguistic Approach*, Cambridge, Mass. 1966, page 270.

Wittgenstein had an inkling of the place which language occupies in religion when he remarked:

Is speech essential for religion? I can very well imagine a religion in which there are no doctrines, and hence nothing is said. Obviously the essence of religion can have nothing to do with the fact that speech occurs — or rather: if speech does occur, this itself is a component of religious behavior [the German original has: *Handlung*, "activity"] and not a theory. Therefore nothing turns on whether the words are true, false or nonsensical.⁹

The ritual origin of syntax is connected with another curious fact, which I mentioned in passing: the Vedic gods fought and created not only with ritual, but also with meters and chants. What an extraordinary thing to do! But no, it is not. Meters and chants are like ritual in that they fail to express meaning, but reflect syntactic structure in its pure form, hence pure activity.

VII

We have not come to the end of our investigation. On the contrary, we have hardly begun. What I hope to have shown is that ritual, which has so far been impervious to our understanding, is meaningless and also a subject amenable to serious study. Once we abandon generalities and start working, a first adequate theory will undoubtedly emerge, sooner or later. Such a theory will not only elucidate ritual; it will throw light on the origins of language, religion, and perhaps man.

What will a theory of ritual be like? — Let us reflect once more on the Agnicayana. The main altar is constructed in the shape of a bird from 1005 kiln-fired bricks, 200 each in four layers, and 205 in the fifth layer which comes on top. The configuration of the first, third and fifth layer is the same; and so is that of the second and fourth. The surface of each layer is $7\frac{1}{2}$ times a square of the Yajamāna's length. The bricks are of ten different shapes. There are 136 squares, 48 oblongs of one size, and 302 of another. In addition there are 207 halves of squares, 202 halves of oblongs, and five more groups consisting of bricks arrived at by further subdivision of the former shapes. There are ten bricks which are half as thick as all the others. All the bricks constitute furthermore another set of groups, each with

⁹ F. Waismann, "Notes on Talks with Wittgenstein," *The Philosophical Review* 74, 1965, page 16.

its own name and consecrated by particular mantras. Most bricks have to be consecrated in a specific, very roundabout order; others may be consecrated in any order, provided one general direction is maintained and the location of the final brick is fixed. Some bricks have figures drawn on them. Others are lifted from their proper place, carried around the altar and put back before they can be fully consecrated. All of this, and much more, is in accordance with numerous precise rules, for which in almost all cases no explanation whatever is offered. Whether or not the rules are arbitrary, they are strictly adhered to. In case of controversy or differences of interpretation, various schools arise which establish different traditions. Unlike sects, ritual traditions co-exist peacefully, they are mutually exclusive and there is neither desire, nor mechanism for conversion. This feature, too, has become a mark of Indian religions.

And so we may return to the question what a theory of ritual would be like. It is unlikely that such a theory, if at all adequate, will be simple, viz., more simple than the ritual facts themselves. There will be complaints about its myriad rules, as there have been about Chomsky and Halle's *Sound Pattern of English*, Euclid's *Elements*, and the *śrauta sūtras*.

A final paragraph and consolation. There must be readers who are shocked, angry or depressed at the thought that ritual (not to mention religion and even language) is not only complex but also meaningless. I am not a bit sad about it. I prefer a thing, like a person, to be itself, and not refer to something or somebody else. For all we know life itself may be meaningless. Seen from without, the life of an ant seems to be just that, a thought that must have occurred to King Solomon (*Proverbs* 6:6). Neither ants, nor we are any the worse for it.

Berkeley, University of California

FRITS STAAL

THE 'DECENSUS AD INFEROS'
IN 'THE TEACHINGS OF SILVANUS' (CG VII, 4)

MALCOLM L. PEEL

*I. Introduction: The Place of Pivotal Theologomena
in the Higher Criticism of Nag Hammadi Texts*

The effort to "place" in literary and intellectual history each of the writings in the Nag Hammadi Library has many analogies to higher criticism of biblical literature. In the case of both, we possess a great many texts which lack any mention of the date of composition, authorship, references to provenance or destination. Further, we encounter writings which are seemingly without echo in later literature, i.e., the "external evidence" accessible to the historian. As a result, investigators—in so many instances—must resort to close examination of "internal evidence" to determine who wrote a Nag Hammadi text, when, where, why. Such evidence includes style and vocabulary, allusions to datable events or persons, type of biblical exegesis used (if any). But of special importance will be the stage of development reflected in important theologomena whose historical trajectories have been traced with some accuracy by past scholarship, theologomena found in such areas as Christology, eschatology, cosmology, theology.

In what follows, we wish the focus attention on one such theologomenon in the fourth treatise of Codex VII, "The Teachings of Silvanus" (hereafter abbreviated *Teach. Silv.*), viz., the "Decensus ad Inferos" of the Christ figure. Our procedure will be, first, to offer some general observations about the nature of the tractate; second, to present an analysis of the two Decensus accounts in *Teach. Silv.*, both literary and in terms of their use of biblical materials; third, to examine major motifs in the Decensus tradition in our document within the context of the development of this tradition in early Christian literature; and, finally, to draw some conclusions about the place of *Teach. Silv.*'s version of the tradition in the history of early Christian thought.

II. *The Nature of the Treatise: An Up-Date*

Though extensive treatment of the nature of our text cannot be offered here,¹ it will be important to an understanding of the Decensus motif in its larger context to sketch briefly some of the results of ongoing research on *Teach. Silv.* Increasingly, the tractate is viewed as one of the few in the Nag Hammadi Library which is not Gnostic,² even though there are gnosticizing passages and concepts in it. The existence of such tendencies makes it easier to understand the work's inclusion in a codex otherwise devoted exclusively to Gnostic literature.

Moreover, investigation of form and content have demonstrated the writing is a piece of Gentile Christian Wisdom literature which is heavily indebted to the Hellenistic Jewish Wisdom tradition.³ Like other writings in this tradition, *Teach. Silv.* has proven to be

¹ Critical introductions to *Teach. Silv.* published include: M. Peel and J. Zandee, "The Teachings of Silvanus from the Library of Nag Hammadi (CG VII, 4: 84, 15-118, 7)," *NovT* 14 (1972) 294-311; W.-P. Funk, "'Die Lehren des Silvanus'. Die vierte Schrift aus Nag-Hammadi-Codex VII eingeleitet und übersetzt vom Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptisch-gnostische Schriften," *TLZ* 100, Nr. 1 (1975) 7-23. See further the popular introduction offered by Peel to "The Teachings of Silvanus (VII, 4)," in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, ed., James M. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) 346-47.

² So J. Zandee, "'Die Lehren des Silvanus' als Teil der Schriften von Nag Hammadi und der Gnostizismus," in *Essays on the Nag Hammadi Texts in Honor of Pahor Labib*, ed., M. Krause (NHS; Leiden: Brill, 1975) 239; H.-M. Schenke, "Zur Faksimile-Ausgabe der Nag-Hammadi-Schriften," *ZÄS* 102 (1975) 135; W.-P. Funk, *TLZ* 100, Nr. 1 (1975) 10; M. Peel and J. Zandee, *NovT* 14 (1972) 308-9.

³ The author of *Teach. Silv.* directly cites *Wisd Sol* 7:25-26 in 112, 37-113, 7 and distinctly echoes both *Wisd Sol* and *Sir* in the following: 100, 30-31 (*Wisd Sol* 14:17); 107, 5 (*Wisd Sol* 6:20); 111, 32-34 (*Wisd Sol* 9:13); 112, 5-8 (*Wisd Sol* 9:16-17); 89, 20-23 (*Sir* 6:31); 97, 18-30 (*Sir* 6:6-13); 112, 27-31 (*Sir* 43:30-31); 112, 33-35 (*Sir* 24:3a). Moreover, Wisdom literary forms employed in the tractate include modes of address ("my son"-85, 1-2, 29; 86, 24; etc.; and "O foolish one"-89, 8; 90, 28; 107, 12); admonitions (positive-88, 13-15; 110, 14-16; etc.; and negative-86, 1-2; 87, 6-7, 19-21; etc.); sayings (descriptive proverbs-97, 7-10; 113, 17-20; etc.; and didactic sayings-87, 33-88, 6; 108, 27-29; etc.); wisdom poems (father-son type-88, 9-15; 91, 14-20; personified Wisdom type-88, 35-89, 12); hymns about God (112, 27-33; cf. 114, 26-115, 4); prayers (86, 16-20; cf. 111, 15-20); contrasts between the wise and the foolish (97, 10-13; 107, 9-12; etc.). See, further, W. R. Schoedel, "Jewish Wisdom and the Formation of the Christian Ascetic," in *Aspects of Wisdom in Judaism and early Christianity*, ed. R. L. Wilken (South Bend, Indiana: U. of Notre Dame, 1975), 169-99.

somewhat eclectic in character, incorporating ideas from biblical,⁴ Philonic,⁵ Late Stoic,⁶ Gnostic,⁷ and Alexandrian Christian⁸ traditions—the whole being permeated by that form of Middle Platonism increasingly recognized as a key catalyst for second and third century Christian thought.⁹

It is also becoming clear that *Teach. Silv.* was written by an Egyptian Christian who may have prized that type of solitude which captured the hearts of faithful hermits and anchorites at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth centuries. The ex-

⁴ An extensive study of the use of Scripture in *Teach. Silv.* has been done by the author and presented partially in his unpublished paper, "Silvanus and the Scriptures - The use of the Bible in a New New Testament Apocryphon" (delivered at the 1973 Society of Biblical Literature Meeting). It will be published in full in the forthcoming Peel-Zandee critical edition and commentary on *Teach. Silv.*

⁵ See J. Zandee, "Les Enseignements de Silvanos et Philon d'Alexandrie," *Mélanges d'Histoire des Religions Offerts à H.-Ch. Puech* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974) 337-45. Cf., further, the supportive comments regarding Philo's influence in W.-P. Funk, *TLZ*, 100, Nr. 1 (1975), 8; and H.-M. Schenke, *ZASA* 102 (1975) 134.

⁶ Although Zandee does not specifically emphasize Late Stoicism, it is clear from parallels presented that this is the most important form of Stoic ideas for the author of *Teach. Silv.* See J. Zandee, "'Die Lehren des Silvanus'. Stoischer Rationalismus und Christentum im Zeitalter der Frühkatholischen Kirche," in *Essays on the Nag Hammadi Texts in the Honour of A. Böhlig*, ed. M. Krause (NHS, 3; Leiden: Brill, 1972) 144-55. However, this writer must express his disagreement with Zandee's emphasis on the impact of "pantheistische Rationalismus der Stoa" on the tractate's Logos-Christology. It is clear from several passages in the text (97, 1-3; 109, 11-21, 30-34; 110, 2-14) that Christ is not an immanent principle in man but rather one who can enter a person's life and illuminate man's reason! Further, the argument in 100,32 - 101,10 is actually directed *against* Stoic pantheism!

⁷ On Gnostic traces in *Teach. Silv.*, see the literature cited in n. # 2, *supra*.

⁸ The initial connection of the tractate with Alexandrine theology was made by the writer in M. Peel and J. Zandee, *NovT* 14 (1972) 306-7. The thesis was adopted and expanded by W.-P. Funk, *TLZ* 100, Nr. 1 (1975) 8-9; and it has now been fairly fully demonstrated by J. Zandee, *The Teachings of Silvanus' and Clement of Alexandria: A New Document of Alexandrian Theology* (Leiden: Ex Oriente Lux, 1977).

⁹ See, on the crucial role of Middle Platonism, J. Daniélou, *Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture (A History of Early Christian Doctrine*, II, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1973) 107-27. For Platonism in *Teach. Silv.* see J. Zandee, "Les Enseignements de Silvain et le Platonisme," in *Les Textes de Nag Hammadi, Colloque du Centre d'Histoire des Religions, 23-25 Octobre 1974*, ed. J. Menard (NHS, VII; Leiden: Brill, 1975) 158-79.

ternal evidence contributing to this view has been provided by W.-P. Funk who has discovered the use of *Teach. Silv.* 97,3 - 98,22 in both an 8th or 9th century Arabic manuscript containing the *Spiritualia Documenta* appended to the *Rule of St. Anthony*, and in a 10th or 11th century Coptic parchment manuscript from the British Museum (Or. 6003 or BM 979) which is also attributed (falsely, however)¹⁰ to Anthony.¹¹ In Funk's view, *Teach. Silv.* 97,3 - 98,22 is a piece of anonymously-authored wisdom writing that was penned initially in the third century, incorporated into *Teach. Silv.* in the late third to fourth century, attributed to Anthony in the fifth to seventh centuries, and used separately in BM 979 (tenth-eleventh century) and in the Arabic version of the *Spiritualia Documenta* (eighth-ninth century). This set of circumstances points toward the possible origin of and/or use of *Teach. Silv.* in monastic circles or, better, some predecessor(s) thereof. Later reverence toward Anthony, the great model of anchorite monasticism (lived ca. 251-356 A.D.), attracted the passage to his legacy.¹²

Internal evidence, however, points toward the connection of *Teach. Silv.* with an anchoritic type of author. This evidence is of three types: first, the document's preoccupation with salvation of the individual self, virtually to the exclusion of concern/love for the neighbor (cf. 92,10 - 94,32). Second, similarities between some of the ideals espoused in *Teach. Silv.* and those expressed in early literature concerning monks of the desert: the subjugation of strong passions and desires (e.g., *Teach. Silv.* 84, 16-26; 89,26 - 90,6; 104,31 - 105,17; 105,23-25; 108,4-6); the conquest of personified

¹⁰ The probabilities are against either *The Rule* or the *Documenta* appended thereto having been written by the famous hermit himself. This is because Athanasius, who wrote the famous *Life of Anthony* (c. 357), does not cite or allude to the *Rule* at all. See, further, on this J. Quasten, *Patrology* 3 (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1963), 152.

¹¹ For full details, including comparison and collation of the two Coptic texts, see W.-P. Funk, "Ein doppelt überliefertes Stück spätägyptischer Weisheit," *ZÄS* 103 (1976) 8-21.

¹² The case for the probable copying and collection of the Nag Hammadi texts by monks of the Pachomian monasteries near Nag Hammadi has been made in part from receipt fragments found in the leather envelope of Codex VII. See J. M. Robinson, *The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, VI (Leiden: Brill, 1972) 4; and J. M. Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library*, pp. 15-18.

powers of evil, such as Satan and his henchmen (e.g., 85, 1-3.13-18.30-32; 86,11-13; 91,14-20; 94,33 - 96,19; 105,26 - 106,8; 108,6-16; 109,11-17.27-34; 110,7-14; 112,10-13; 114,1-15; 117,13-18); the attainment of virtue (e.g., 92,34 - 93,5; 110,9-12; 111,17); withdrawal from men to be the friend of God alone (cf. 97,30 - 98,20).¹³ Third, and finally, the absence of that technical vocabulary commonly associated with cenobitic monastic communities, such as those founded by Pachomius, definitely points toward the text's composition outside such a community. For example, we do not encounter mention of the δίκαιος (a "righteous one" or member of the community); the προεστώς, ἀρχιμανδρίτης, **ΠΟΒ ΠΡΩΜΕ, ΕΙΩΤ** (all terms denoting superiors of a cenobitic monastery); the οἰκονομος (community "steward"); the **ΠΝΟΒ ΝΚΝΗΥ** or **ΠΝΟΒ ΝΩΗΡΕ** (superior brethren or senior monks); or διακονία (religious "service").¹⁴

The chief aim of the author of *Teach. Silv.* is to help the reader become "pleasing to" and thus "like" God (98, 18-20; 108,25-35; 111,8-11; 114, 23-26; 115, 26-29). This is done through rational control over base impulses of the flesh and body, a control made possible by the teaching of Christ and his illumination of one's "reason (λόγος)" (cf. 88,22-32; 98,14-28; 101,28-32; 106,26; 110,17-18; 117,7-9). This is the way of wisdom provided by Christ, the personified Wisdom (106,23; 107,9; 112,35 - 113,7 // Wisd Sol 7:25-26).

III. The "Decensus" in *Silvanus*

A. The Texts

From the second century on there was no more well-known and popular belief among early Christians than that pertaining to Christ's "Decensus ad Inferos".¹⁵ This, of course, was the belief

¹³ Cf. Palladius, *hist. Lausaica*, I, 2 (virtues of Isidore); II, 2 (subduing passions); VI, 4 (virtue needed); VIII, 4 (virtue of Amoun of Nitria); IX, 1 (virtue of Or); X, 7 (virtue of Pambo); XI, 5 (freedom from passion of Ammonius); XVI, 2-3 (struggle with demons by Nathaniel); XVII, 2 (gift of fighting spirits of Macarius). The list could be expanded to include illustrative materials from the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, the *Vita Antonii*, and other sources.

¹⁴ These technical terms from cenobitic monasticism in Egypt have been collected by P. E. Kahle, *Bala'izah: Coptic Texts from Deir El-Bala'izah in Upper Egypt* (London: Oxford, 1954) I, 31-38.

¹⁵ So J. A. MacCulloch, *The Harrowing of Hell: A Comparative Study of an Early Christian Doctrine* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930) 45.

that between his death and Resurrection Christ entered Hell, preached to the dead, vanquished death, and released imprisoned souls. The presence of not one but two accounts of this theologoumenon in *Teach. Silv.* (103,28 - 104,14 and 110,18-34) bespeaks its importance for the author of our text, as well. Thus, we turn to close consideration of it, both to see what help it provides in understanding the document's teaching and to try to place it more surely in the intellectual and literary history of the Early Church. The "outer limits" of our comparisons run from early forms of the Decensus tradition in such second century texts as *The Apocalypse of Peter*, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, and the *Odes of Solomon* to such homiletically elaborate forms as those of the fourth century authors Aphraates and Ephraem of Syria, and a text like the *Gospel of Nicodemus*.¹⁶ Let us begin with a look at the texts:

<i>Account "A"</i>		<i>Account "B"</i>	
	(103, 23-104, 14)		(110, 14-111, 4)
28	"... Ο (ὁ) soul (ψυχή), lag- gard (ὀπομένειν),	14	"... Know who Christ (Χρισ- τός) is
	in what ignorance you exist!		and acquire him as a friend,
30	For (γάρ) who		for (γάρ) this is the friend who
	is your guide		is faithful.
	into the darkness? How many		He is also God and
	likenesses		Teacher. This one, being God,
	did Christ (Χριστός) take on		became
	because of your?		man for your sake. It is this one
	Although he was God, he [was	20	who
	found] ¹⁷		broke the iron bars (μοχλός)
104,			of the Underworld and the
1	among men as (ὡς) a man.		bronze bolts.
	He descended to the Under-		It is this one who attacked
	world. He released		and cast down

¹⁶ We are not unaware of the pre-Christian antecedents to the Decensus tradition in Sumerian, Akkadian, Assyrian, Greek, and Roman mythology. Such are reviewed in summary fashion by W. v. Soden, "Höllenfahrt," *RGG*³, III (1959), cols. 407-8; and A. Grillmeier, "Höllenabstieg Christi, Höllenfahrt Christi," in *LTK* 5 (1960), 450-1. However, in order to narrow the study sufficiently, we confine comparisons in the main to Christian literature from the first five centuries.

¹⁷ The translation represents a reconstruction of the lacuna as α[γ]ό[ι]ε. Cf. the use of εὐρίσκω in Lk 9:36; Ac 8:40; Heb 11:5; Rev 20:15. W.-P. Funk, *TLZ* 100, Nr. 1 (1975) 17, n. 13, has adopted this reconstruction from our initial transcription and translates: "erfu[nd]en".

- the children of death. They
were in travail, as (κατά)
5 the Scripture (γραφῇ) of God
has said. And
he sealed up (σφραγίζειν) the
(very) heart
of It (i.e., the Underworld).
And he broke its strong
bows¹⁸
completely. And
when all the powers (δύναμεις)
had seen
10 him, they fled so that he might
bring you, wretched one (ταλ-
αίπωρος),¹⁹
up from the Abyss and might
die for you
as a ransom for your sin. He
saved
14 you from the strong hand of
the Underworld."
- every haughty tyrant (τύραν-
νος). It is he
25 who loosened from himself the
chains
of which he had taken hold.
He brought up the poor from
the
Abyss and the mourners from
the Underworld. It is he who
humbled
30 the haughty powers (δύναμεις);
he who put to shame haughti-
ness
through humility; he who cast
down the strong and
the boaster through weakness;
35 he who in his contempt scorned
that which is
- III,
1 considered an honor
so that
humility for God's sake might
be highly exalted;
4 (and) he who has put on
humanity."

B. A Literary Analysis

These provisional remarks may be made: first, both accounts seem to rest on a common oral but not written source. The evidence for this lies in the facts that both "A" and "B" reveal a common style and share the same basic themes, e.g., in both Christ's Incarnation is connected with the Decensus, in both he routs the powers of the Underworld, in both his goal is the deliverance from the Abyss of those suffering in bondage. Even so, the wording and em-

¹⁸ Funk, *ibid.*, 17, translates these lines: "Und ihre starken Torbögen zerbrach er gänglich . . ." The rendering of **ΠΙΤΕ** as "Torbögen" is incorrect. W. E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary* (Oxford: University, 1939) 276a, offers several examples of the use of **ΠΙΤΕ** (e.g., Gen 9:13; Hos 7:16; Rev 6:2), all of which refer or are related exclusively to an archery "bow". Further, the expression "to break the bows" is commonly used in the OT to denote victory over one's enemies: cf. 1 Sam 2:4; Ps 37:14-15; 46:9; Jer 51:56. Finally, the "bows" are to be understood as part of the defenses of Hades wielded by its "haughty tyrant" and "powers" (104, 9-10; cf. 110, 24, 30).

¹⁹ W. R. Schoedel, "Jewish Wisdom," 184, maintains that the address, "wretched one", is a distinguishing characteristic of the Stoic-Cynic diatribe here adapted to the framework of Wisdom literature.

phases of the two accounts preclude use of a common literary text, e.g., in "A" we find stress on Christ's "ransom" of captives "from sin" and the "saving" of them, we hear of "likenesses" taken on by Christ, and we encounter the "children of death . . . in travail"; whereas, in account "B" we find greater stress on Christ's smashing of the defenses of Hell, we read of his release from "the chains" which bound him, and we learn of his "humiliation" of the "haughty". Second, neither Account "A" or "B" is an interpolation in the text by a later editor. Given the repetitive nature of Wisdom literature, it is not unusual to find the same theme picked up twice in the same text. Further, both accounts fit well into their respective contexts and contain conceptions of Christology, cosmology, soteriology consistent with what appears elsewhere in the document. Third, if the preceding observations are correct, then we feel justified in treating the traditional material contained in Accounts "A" and "B" synthetically, i.e., drawing material from both to reconstruct the author's Decensus tradition.

C. The Use of Biblical Materials

A comparison of Key elements in Accounts "A" and "B" with the LXX version of Ps 107:10-16 seems to show that the tradition of the Decensus utilized by our author has received its general framing from that Psalm:

Elements from Accounts "A & B"

Ps 107 (106): 10-16

1) Christ, as the "guide into darkness" (103, 31-32),²⁰ came to help

1) Ps 107 (106): 10, 12, 13a -
"Some were sitting in darkness

²⁰ W.-P. Funk, *TLZ*, 100, Nr. 1 (1975) 17, takes 103, 30-32 as referring to a false guide: "Wer führt dich denn (immer wieder) in die Finsternis hinein!" However, the lines are actually a rhetorical question (introduced by the interrogative ΝΙΜ) which, following the conjunction ΓΑΡ, directs the reader to Christ as the "guide" who has taken on "many likenesses" while leading mankind "into" (and thus "through") the "darkness" (= "ignorance"; cf. 88, 13-15; 89, 14-16; 102, 23-26) of this world. A comment of Cl Al is instructive (*Paed* I, 3:9, 2-3): "But we wander in thick darkness (ἐν σκότῳ βαθεῖ ἀλώμενοι); we need an unerring guide (ἀκριβοῦς καθοδηγοῦ) who will keep us from stumbling. The best guide (ὁδηγός) is not a blind one (cf. *Teach. Silv.* 88, 19-21) who . . . 'leads the blind into the ditch' (Matt 15:14), but the Logos (= Christ), keen of sight, penetrating into the secret places of the heart" (text from O. Stählin, *Clemens Alexandrinus* (GCS, I; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1936) 95. Cf. Orig, *Cels* VII, 51 (M. Borret, *Origène. Contre Celse* (SC, 150; Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1967) 134-36.

the "children of death" (104, 3), i.e., the "poor" and the "mourners" (110, 27-28), who were captive in the Underworld/Abyss (104, 2.7; 110, 27-29). They were "in travail"²¹ (104, 2-3; cf. Rom 8:22).

- 2) Christ descended to those in travail (104, 2; 110, 27-29, inferred); broke the strong bows of the Underworld (104, 7-8), as well as its iron bars and bronze bolts (110, 20-21); and thereby released (104, 2; cf. 110, 25), brought up (104, 11-12; 110, 27), and saved (104, 13) those held captive.

and in the shadow of death (ἐν σκότει καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου), having been imprisoned in affliction and in irons (ἐν πτωχείᾳ καὶ σιδηρῶ) . . .

Their hearts were bowed down with labor,

They were weak and there was no one to help;

and they cried to the Lord in their tribulation (ἐν τῷ θλίβεσθαι αὐτούς) " . . . "

- 2) Ps 107:13b-14, 16 -

"And He saved (ἔσωσεν) them from their distress,

and He led them out of darkness and the shadow of death (ἐν σκότους καὶ σκιᾷ θανάτου),

and he broke their bonds asunder (τοὺς δεσμούς αὐτῶν διέρρηξεν). . . .

For he shattered the bronze doors (πύλας χαλκᾶς)

- 2) and smashed the bars of iron (μοχλοὺς σιδηροῦς)."

To be noted is the fact that the wording of the Psalm has been transposed to apply now to the experience of captives in Hades. Also, there has occurred considerable embroidery of the material with other pseudepigraphical and biblical materials. Cf. the following:

²¹ In the text the expression **אֵינִי נֹאֲכָה** translates a form of **וְדִינֵי**, "to be in travail," i.e., to be experiencing throes and pains comparable to those of a woman in childbirth. Cf. with this expression in context the following: Ps 17:5-6 (LXX)—"The travail (birth-pangs) of Death (ὡδίνες θανάτου) encompassed me, and torrents of lawlessness assailed me. The travail of Hades (ὡδίνες ᾗδου) surrounded me, the snares of Death confronted me." Cf. 4 Esdr 4:41-43:

"(The context: Ezra asking the Lord about the time of the Eschaton) . . . he (the Lord) answered me (Ezra) and said: 'Go, ask the woman who is pregnant, when she has completed her nine months, if the womb can keep the birth any longer within her?' Then I (Ezra) said, 'No lord, it cannot.' And he said to me: 'The Underworld and the chambers of the souls are like the womb, for just as she who is in travail makes haste to escape the anguish of travail; even so do these places (in Hell) hasten to deliver what has been entrusted to them from the beginning'" (translation from R. H. Charles, ed., *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), II, 567-8).

(1) 103,32-33, Christ's "likenesses" or disguises with Pauline statements regarding Christ coming ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας (Rom 8:3) or ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων (Phil 2:5b-8); (2) 103,34 - 104,2.11-12; cf. 110,18-19.27-29, Christ's "descent" from above with 1 Pet 3:19-20; Phil 2:5-8; Eph 4:9-10; (3) 104,3-5, the "children of death" who were "in travail" (literally, "in birth-pangs") with similar statements in Ps 17:5-6 (LXX) and 4 Esdr 4:41-43 (see note # 21, *supra*); (4) 104,5-8, Christ's "sealing up of the heart" of the Underworld with Rev 20:1-3 where God's angel at the End throws Satan into a bottomless pit "... and shut it and sealed it over him (ἐσφράγισεν ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ)"; (5) 104,7-8, the "bows" of Hades with *Eth Enoch* 17:3-4, which refers to a "fiery bow and arrows and their quiver . . .," seemingly as part of Sheol's furnishings; ²² (6) 110,27-29, the raising up or salvation of the "poor" and the "mourners" by the Divine with similar expressions in Pss 34:6; 113:7; Isa 60:20; 61:2-3a; Jer 31:13b; Matt 5:4; Rev 21:4; (7) 104,9-10; 110,22-24.29-30, the routing and triumphing over inimical powers with Christ's similar work in Col 2:15; (8) 104,11-12; 110,17-18, Christ's bringing men "up from the Abyss" with similar expressions in Jonah 2:6; Zech 9:11; Job 33:30; Ps 103:4; (9) 104,12-13, Christ's death as a "ransom for . . . sin" with mention of this very work in Mark 10:45; 1 Tim 2:5-6; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 1:18; Rev 5:9. ²³

The synthesis of all these and other elements in the Decensus accounts of *Teach. Silv.* is best understood, however, against a background of developments of this tradition in early Patristic literature. To this we now turn.

IV. *Major Motifs in the Light of Early Christian Development of the Decensus Tradition*

A. (*Teach. Silv.* 103,34 - 104,2; 110,18-21; 111,4) *The Incarnation as a Decensus ad Inferos.*

Careful examination of the Decensus Accounts "A" and "B" in our document reveals the author has identified the Incarnation

²² On the OT background of the expression "to break the bows", see our n. # 18, *supra*.

²³ With the combination of Christ's "ransoming" and bringing captives up from the Underworld, cf. Hos 13:14—"Shall I (God) ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from death?" Cf. Job 33:22-24; Ps 49:7-9.15.

with Christ's descent into Hades. In Account "A" the statement that Christ as God has become man is juxtaposed with the assertion that he "descended into the Underworld" (103,34 - 104,2). This is not a sequential assertion. In Account "B" two affirmations of Christ's Incarnation (110,18-19; 111,4) frame everything else said about his conquest of the Underworld, with no distinctions made between the two. Further, Christ's work in bringing up captives from the Underworld is linked with his acceptance of humility and weakness, as well as with his scorn for worldly honor (110,27 - 111,3; cf. with the latter Phil 2:5-8).

Such an identification of Incarnation with the Decensus must mean, moreover, that the author also considers this present world as "Hades"! That this is so is shown, on the one hand, by the statement that the reader himself ("... you, wretched one"—104,11) has been brought up from the Abyss and ransomed from sin by Christ (104,10-13) and, on the other, by the assertion that his Incarnation/Decensus has been undertaken on the reader's "behalf" (110,18-20). Unless the author is writing to readers assumed to be already raised to heaven, he must mean that Christ's victorious activity in Hades actually took place in this present world. Further support for this view is found in other disparaging comments about the world in *Teach. Silv.*: the whole world has become "deceitful" and all in it is useless and vain (97,30 - 98,5); the earth is characterized by profitless suffering and pain (98,5-13); Christ, while Incarnate, was in the "deficiency" (101,31-34); life on this earth seems under the control of "world-rulers of darkness" and evil "powers" (117,13-19; cf. Eph 6:12; 2:2).

This transformation of Christ's descent into human form (Incarnation) into a descent to the Hades of this world to conquer its inimical rulers and free its captives is clearly a gnosticizing tendency and can be paralleled in numerous teachings and texts clearly identified as Gnostic (e.g., the Simonian system; the Valentinian; the Mandaean; the *Naassene Hymn*; the *Acts of Thomas*; and several texts from Nag Hammadi).²⁴ However, there are a set of striking

²⁴ See the following: Simonian teaching (Iren, *Haer* I, 23, 2); Valentinian teaching (Iren, *Haer* I, 5, 4; I, 6, 1; I, 30, 8); Mandaean teaching (*Ginza* 258, 389-90); Ac Thom (chs. 10-45; *Naassene Hymn* (Hipp, *Ref* V, 10, 2); *GrPow* (CG VI, 4:41, 6-20); *Tri Prot* (CG XIII, 1:41, 1-15); *GTr* (CG I, 2; 26, 4-27).

differences which preclude the simple identification of the Decensus tradition in *Teach. Silv.* as Gnostic.

First, and most basic, although the Gnostic Decensus presupposes that this world is intrinsically evil and thus truly Hades for the "spiritual" Elect; the author of our tractate maintains the world, despite its fallen nature, has been created by a Demiurge (δημιουργός-116, 8) who is none other than the Good Father of Jesus Christ (cf. 100, 13-16; 115, 16-19; 116, 5-11). Indeed, the world is even viewed as revelatory of Divine Providence (e.g., 100, 32-101, 10; 114, 33-115, 15; cf. 113, 13-20). Second, whereas the Redeemer's assumption of a human body is docetically-conceived in Gnostic systems, in *Teach. Silv.* Christ's Incarnation is real—cf., e.g., how he "bore affliction" (θλιβεῖν) for mankind's sins (103, 25-28), "died" as a "ransom for sin" and to give life to others (104, 8-13; 107, 9-16); put on "humanity" (110, 18-19; 111, 3-4), "troubled himself" and "mourned" over the condemned (113, 24-31). These two facts about the text seem decisive, i.e., neither *Teach. Silv.* as a whole nor the Decensus accounts which form part of it can be described as Gnostic. More difficult, however, is the discovery of an adequate rationale for the transformation of the Decensus motif.

Some help may be afforded by noting the synthesis of Christ's saving work in Hades with that which he did on earth in two early sources, neither of which is indisputably Gnostic.²⁵ In the first, viz., the *Odes Sol.*, we read of Christ that after he was caused "to descend from on high" (22, 1a) by the Father, he raised the dead by "ascending from the regions below" (22, 1b), loosening their bonds (cf. *Teach. Silv.* 110, 24-26) and vanquishing the Devil. Simultaneously, however, Christ conquered enemies in the air, on the earth, and in Hell, with the result that the NT conception of his combat against evil Powers on the Cross (e.g., Col 6:12 Eph 2:2) is synthesized with that of combat against Death in Hell.²⁶ A further

²⁵ W. Bauer, "The Odes of Solomon," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher (Eng tr; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965), 2, 809-10, it is true, asserts that a growing consensus has it that the *Odes Sol.* are really a second century hymn-book which is "Gnostic", "... understood in a broad sense." However, some decisive criticism of this position has been offered by J. H. Charlesworth, "The Odes of Solomon—Not Gnostic," *CBQ* 31 (1969) 357-69.

²⁶ This line of interpretation of *Odes Sol.* is taken by J. Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1964), 246.

result of such synthesis is that sharp distinctions between the upper world of living men and the lower world of Hades fall away, and the two are fused.²⁷

The same type of synthesis appears in the writing of Origen of Alexandria.²⁸ As is known, Orig thought that in the "Urzeit" all beings were intellectual in nature and pre-existed in heaven. Because of spiritual defects most of these souls "fell" from heaven and were condemned to live in lower regions, possessing bodies more gross and solid in nature (see, e.g., *Princ* III, 5, 4; IV, 3, 10-11; *Hom in Jos* VI, 4). In a real sense, then, the world is a place of punishment and moral trial for those in it.²⁹ So it is not surprising to find Orig speaking of this world as a type of Hades: (*Princ* IV, 3, 10)-" . . . so the people there (i.e., the inhabitants of the heavens above the earth), when they 'die' . . . descend into this Hades (εἰς τὸν ἕδης τοῦτον καταβαίνουσι) and are judged better or worse, in the whole of this region of earth."³⁰ Most remarkable for our comparison with *Teach. Silv.*, however, is Orig's connection of Christ's Incarnation with his Decensus into this Hades/world in order to save both the living and the dead: (*Comm in John* VI, 35, 174-77) (referring to John the Baptist's expression of his unworthiness to loosen the thong of Jesus' sandal/Mark 1:7):

"I think, then, that the Incarnation (τὴν ἐνανθρώπησιν), when the Son of God takes on flesh and bones, constitutes one of the 'sandals', and the descent into Hades (τὴν εἰς Ἄδου κατάβασιν), whatever that Hades be, and the journey in spirit into the prison constitutes the other . . . He, then, who is able worthily to set forth the meaning of these two journies is able to untie the thong of Jesus' shoes; he, bending in his mind and going with Jesus, as He goes down to Hades, and descending

²⁷ So J. Kroll, *Gott und Hölle: Der Mythos vom Decensuskampfe* (Berlin: B. G. Teubner, 1932), pp. 35-36.

²⁸ By contrast, Cl Al nowhere notes any connection of earth with Hades and, in fact, rejects any Platonic notions of the pre-existence of souls which might have fallen to this earth. Cf. *Strom* I, 15:67, 3-4.

²⁹ See Orig, *Princ* I, 8, 1; *Comm in Rom* 2, 13; *Comm in Cant*, Prol.

³⁰ Indeed, Orig further distinguishes between an "upper Hades" (= this world) and a "lower Hades" (= the place whence souls of the deceased are dispatched) (so *Princ* IV, 3, 10; P. Koetschau, *Origenes Werke* (GCS, V; Leipzig: Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1913), p. 337). Similarly, the author of *Teach. Silv.* seems to hold to a distinction between the Hades which is this world (accounts "A" and "B") and a lower "Abyss" to which those condemned to punishment are sent (e.g., 103, 19-24; 104, 26-30; 113, 25-27; 114, 23-26).

from heaven . . . to the Advent He of necessity made with us when He took on man (as a shoe). Now he who put on man also put on the dead, for 'for this end Jesus both died and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living' (Rom 14:9) . . . that is, the inhabitants of earth and those of Hades (τὸν ἐν γῇ καὶ τὸν ἐν ᾍδου) . . ."³¹

We encounter close connections between the Decensus and Christ's Incarnation elsewhere in Patristic literature of the first five centuries.³² However, the virtual identification of the two, coupled with the treatment of earth and Hades as synonymous, does not occur—outside of Gnostic texts—except in *Odes Sol.* and Orig. This points us toward the late second to early third century and perhaps (if Orig. be the key) suggests allegory as the background of similar conceptions in *Teach. Silv.*

B. (103, 32-34) *The Saviour's Disguised Descent*

The statement that Christ "took on many likenesses" (*Teach. Silv.* 103, 32-33) may be taken as implying a disguised descent into this Hades/world. If so, then two questions arise: from whom is Christ hiding himself and for what reason? Our tentative answers, which some of the following parallels support, would be, first, that he sought to keep his identity concealed from Satan (the "haughty tyrant" in 110, 24 is probably, by analogy to 85, 17, Satan himself) and from Satan's evil powers (104, 9-10; cf. 110, 30).³³ Especially was Christ's human "likeness" a disguise from these base beings. But, second, the reason for such disguises is that

³¹ The translation is based on the text established by C. Blanc, *Origène. Commentaire sur Saint Jean.* 2 (SC, 157; Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1970) 260-62.

³² Connections between the Decensus and the Incarnation, which are, however, clearly distinguished from each other, appear in the following: Hipp, *Antichr* 26; Tert, *Anim* 55; Iren, *Haer* 3, 20, 4; 4, 22, 1; 4, 27, 2; the *Abgar Legend* from Eus, *Hist Eccl* 1, 13, 5; *Ev Nicod* III (XIX). The first creedal appearance of the formula "descendit ad inferos" was in the Fourth Formula of Sirmium (c. 359 A.D.)

³³ It is difficult to decide whether the author views Hades (= the Underworld) as also a personified being, as is the case in *Ev Nicod* IV-VIII where both Hades and Satan are duped by Christ. Cf. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1, 472-75. In support of such an interpretation would be our tractate's statements regarding Hades' open mouth (103, 23), its "heart" (104, 6-7), its "bows" (104, 5); and its "strong hand" (104, 13-14). On the other hand, such may be only figurative language and not an indication of personification.

they enable Christ both to surprise and to overthrow these beings. (Elsewhere in the text (cf. 96, 21-25), Christ deceives the Adversary, making him think he (Christ) is mortal and thereby bringing about his destruction.) Christ's self-revelation seems to cause the haughty powers to flee in terror (104, 9-10), turning their "haughtiness" into "humiliation" (110, 22-24. 29-32).

Once again we meet a theme familiar from Gnostic sources,³⁴ though equally primitive forms of it appear also in Jewish Christian Christology.³⁵ In trying to determine which stream of tradition influenced our tractate's conception two issues are critical: first, what is the true nature of the powers from whom Christ is disguised; second, is his Incarnation/Decensus truly an Incarnation or only a docetic ploy? With respect to the former, in Jewish Christian sources the powers deceived are orders of angelic beings; in Gnostic sources they are rather planetary powers, the cosmocrators who dominate the lower world, the work of the Demiurge. Close examination of *Teach. Silv.* reveals that with the exception of 117, 14-16, where mention is made of "the world-rulers of darkness and of this sort of air which is full of powers" (a type of formulary reference distinctly echoing Eph 6:12 and 2:2); all references are to "angels and archangels" (91, 29-30; 100, 19-20; 106, 8; 115, 34-35; 116, 32)³⁶ or to "powers of the Adversary" (i.e., the Devil) who have no cosmic but only ethical and personal functions (88, 5; 91, 19; 105, 34; 109, 14; 114, 5-6.10). With respect to the second issue, viz., the nature of Christ's Incarnation, we have earlier demonstrated that *Teach. Silv.*'s Christology is non-docetic. Thus, it would appear that the source of our tractates tradition regarding the disguised descent of the Saviour is Jewish Christian Christology rather than Gnosticism.

³⁴ Cf. the disguised descent tradition in Simonian Gnosticism: Iren, *Haer* I, 23, 3; Epiph, *Pan* XXI, 2:4; Tert, *Anima*, 34, 4; in the *PistSoph* 7, 12; in Ophite Gnosticism: Orig, *Cels* 6, 30-31.34; Iren, *Haer* I, 30, 11-13; in Basilidean Gnosticism: Iren, *Haer* I, 24, 4-6. The *Ac Thom* (5, 48; 13, 153) calls Jesus: "thou of many forms" (ὁ πολύμορφος or πολύμορφε Ἰησοῦ).

³⁵ E.g., in *Physiologus Graecus*, recension B; *Asc Isa* 10, 7-12.20.24.29; 11, 16; *Ep Apos* 13. See, further, on Jewish Christian Christology's use of the motif, J. Daniélou, *Theology of Jewish Christianity*, pp. 206-10.

³⁶ To be noted is the fact that archangels are always mentioned together with angels in *Teach. Silv.*, as though the phrase "the angels and the archangels" has become formulary.

A few parallels are instructive: *Asc Isa* IX, 12-17:

"... the Beloved will descend in the form in which you (Isaiah) will see him descend; that is to say, in the last days the Lord, who will be called Christ, will descend into the world.—Nevertheless, they will see the thrones and know to whom they shall belong . . . after he has descended and become like you in appearance, and they will think he is flesh and a man. And the god of that world will stretch forth his hand against the Son, and they will lay hands on him and crucify him on a tree, without knowing who he is. So his descent, as thou shalt see, is hidden from the heavens so that it remains unperceived who he is. And when he has made spoil of the angel of death (cf. *Teach. Silv.* 110, 23-24) he will arise . . . and many of the righteous will ascend with him" (cf. *Teach. Silv.* 104, 2-4; 110, 27-29).³⁷

This oldest form of the tradition appears to have influenced the Alexandrian Fathers. Cl Al, interpreting the statement in Lev 16: 23-24 that the High Priest must put off his garments when departing the Sanctuary states that it "... signifies that the Lord abandons one form of clothing and takes on another when he descends into the sensible world" (*Strom* V, 6: 40, 3; cf. *Exc Theod* XVIII, 1). Orig is even more explicit: *Cels* II, 67- "... when he (Christ) was sent into the world he did not merely make himself known; he also concealed (ἀέθῃ) himself. For his whole nature was not known even to the people who knew him, but some part of him escaped them; and to some he was entirely unknown. But he opened the gates of light to them that were in darkness (cf. *Teach. Silv.* 103, 30-32) and were sons of light."³⁸ Cf. *Princ* III, 3, 2, where it is stated that because of Christ's disguises the princes of this world tried to lay snares for him "... not knowing who was concealed within him." This is very much in the spirit of our tractate's teaching on the disguised descent. Further, and importantly, it is to be noted that Orig is the first Christian theologian of whom we have record who—like the author of *Teach. Silv.* (cf. 104, 12-13)—connected the ideas of Jesus' deception of Satan with that of his being a "ransom" offered to Satan for man's release.³⁹ This is another

³⁷ The translation is from E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2, p. 657. Cf., also, *Asc Isa* 10, 7-14, 18-31; 11, 22-32, for even more specific descriptions of Christ's Decensus disguises among the angels.

³⁸ For the Greek text, see M. Borret, *Origène* (SC, 132; 1967), 444.

³⁹ This conclusion about Orig is offered by J. A. MacCulloch, *The Harrowing of Hell*, p. 200.

bit of evidence which points us toward third century Egypt as the time of composition of *Teach. Silv.*

The culmination of this part of the tradition is found in the fifth century *Ev Nicod* wherein Satan tells personified Hades that a certain Jesus of the Jews is "... (only) a man ...," (and) "now that he is dead, be prepared that we may secure him here (in the Underworld)" (Chap. IV). The ensuing dialogue makes clear that through his disguised Decensus Christ has overcome the haughtiness of Satan, has duped Hades, and has conquered both of them in revealing his true identity (chaps. V-VIII).⁴⁰

C. (104, 5-10. 13-14; cf. 110, 19-26. 29-34) *The Purposes of the Decensus: The Conquest of Hades*

Even more prominently stressed in Accounts "A" and "B" than the disguised descent of the Saviour is Christ's conquest of Hades via his Decensus. This conquest seems to have two phases: the destruction of Hades' defenses and the routing of its ruling inhabitants. In the first phase, Christ "breaks the strong bows" (104, 7-8) apparently used to defend Hades' walls. He smashes the "iron bars" and "bronze bolts" (110, 19-21), i.e., of the very gates of Hades;⁴¹ and he "loosens the chains" (110, 24-26) used to try to bind him (and others?). In the second phase, Christ "attacks and casts down ... every haughty tyrant" (110, 22-24), including, probably, Satan (cf. the "tyrant" mentioned in 85, 17-18) and/or Death (cf. personified "Death" alluded to in 90, 23-24; 91, 2-3. 10; 104, 3). He also humbles "the haughty powers" (110, 29-30), apparently through "humility" and "weakness" displayed in his death and descent to Hades/Earth (110, 31-34). He "deals up the heart" of the Underworld (104, 5-7), possibly incarcerating Satan there, and causes its demonic "powers" to flee in fear (104, 8-10).

1. Phase One: Destruction of Hades Defenses

As noted previously,⁴² "breaking the bow" (104, 7) is a common

⁴⁰ For the full text, see E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 1, 473-75.

⁴¹ It seems clear that the **ΜΜΟΧΛΟC** = *μοχλοί* and **ΝΚΛ** = *κλειθρα* mentioned in 110, 20-21 are actually parts of the doors of Hades. See W. E. Crum, *A Coptic Dictionary*, p. 103b, on the use of **ΚΑΛΕ** and **ΜΟΧΛΟC** to denote parts of a door in TT 101 S.

⁴² See note # 18, *supra*.

OT expression for Divine judgment on enemies. Also, because no Patristic account of the Decensus from the first five centuries contains an allusion to the "bows" of Hades, we have suggested the source of such imagery may be *Eth Enoch* 17:3-4.

The "breaking of the iron bars" and "bronze bolts" of the gates of Hades (110, 20-21) is common feature of Decensus accounts from the second century on. The imagery is, of course, even older, the Classical world having known of a Tartarus with iron gates and a bronze threshold (cf. Hom, *Il* VIII, 15; Vergil, *Aen* VI, 576) and the biblical tradition of doors of bronze and bars of iron (cf. Ps 107:16; Isa 45:2). However, though mention of Christ's smashing the gates and iron bars of Hades is encountered frequently,⁴³ specific allusion to both bronze and iron parts of the doors is less common. Cf. the following: Tert, *Res Carn* 44—(commenting on Christ's emergence from Hades as fulfilling the hope of Ps 107:16) "... therefore that life (of the Lord manifest in believers) is meant which 'has broken the adamantine gates of death and the bronze bars of the lower world (quae portas adamantinas mortis et aeneas seras infernorum infregit)' ...";⁴⁴ Eus (Caes), *Dem Ev* VIII, 1 (cf. X, 8)—(Christ) "... shattered the gates of brass and broke the iron bonds, and set free the prisoners from Hades"; *Quaes Barth* 18 (CPV Mss./3rd century-Egypt?)—"... the Devil ... said, 'Do not fear Hades; we will make fast the gates and make strong our bars. For God himself does not come down on earth ... (20) And thereupon I (Christ) dashed in pieces the gates of brass, and I

⁴³ Cf. the following: *Odes Sol.* 17, 9-11—"... I (Christ) opened the doors which were closed, and I shattered the bars of iron, ..." (J. Charlesworth, *Odes of Solomon*, 75); Hipp, *Pasch*—"... He (Christ) went to Hades ... He broke and destroyed the gates of Hades and the iron doors and bolts were broken" (G. N. Bonwetsch and H. Achelis, *Hippolyts Werke* (GCS, 12; Leipzig: Heinrich'sche Buchhandlung, 1897), 269); Aphraates, *Hom* 12—"Our Saviour divided Hell and shattered its gates in pieces ..." (adapted from Kroll, *Gott und Höll*, 68); *Hom* 14—"... (Christ) went into Hell, ... smashed its doors and destroyed its bolts ... He brought the captives out of Hell's prison" (Kroll, p. 68); Ephr Syr, *Transfiguration Christi* 14—"And if he (Christ) was not God, who then smashed the gates of the Underworld and broke the bonds ...?" (Kroll, 97, n. 4).

⁴⁴ The Latin text is found in *Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina: II. Tertulliani Opera*, Pars II (Turnholti: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontifici, 1954), 980.

shattered the iron bars"; ⁴⁵ *Ev Nicod* V (XXI)—(Upon Christ's arrival in the Underworld) "Then Hades said, 'Make fast well and strongly the gates of brass and bars of iron, . . . For if he (Christ) comes in, woe will seize us.'" Then Christ is identified to Hades as "the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle (Ps 23:8 LXX) . . . And immediately, . . . the gates of brass were broken in pieces and the bars of iron were crushed . . . And the King of glory entered in"; ⁴⁶ Athan (?), *d Virg* 16—Hades, seeing Christ descending to the Underworld, states: "Who is this breaking the bronze gates of Hades and shattering the adamantine bolts?" ⁴⁷ From these passages, it would appear that the use of Ps 107 (106): 16 and Isa 45:2 in the Decensus tradition is the bridge between this part of our tractate's Decensus account and the tradition represented by the Fathers given above.

Apparently, the powers of Hades/earth have attempted to bind Christ in chains, for in *Teach. Silv.* 110, 14-16 we read of him loosening them from himself. The same motif appears in several Decensus accounts: *Odes Sol.* 17, 9-10—" . . . I (Christ) opened the doors (of Hell) which were closed. And I shattered the bars of iron, for my own shackle(s) had grown hot and melted before me"; Ode 22, 1. 4—"He (God) who caused me to descend from on high, . . . gave me authority over bonds, that I (Christ) might unbind them"; ⁴⁸ Iren, *Haer* V, 21, 3—" . . . so . . . it was necessary that through man himself (i.e., the Incarnate Christ) he (Satan) should, when conquered, be bound with the same chains (collogari iisdem vinculis) with which he bound man, in order that man, being set free, might return to his Lord, leaving to Satan those chains (illa vincula) by which he himself had been fettered, that is, sin"; ⁴⁹ Athan, *Inc c Apoll* I, 13—Death mistakenly took Christ's soul to be that of a mere man, but " . . . Christ came with a soul which could not be

⁴⁵ Quoted from E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, I, 490.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 473-4.

⁴⁷ Quoted by J. A. MacCulloch, *The Harrowing of Hell*, 79.

⁴⁸ Quotes are from J. Charlesworth, *Odes of Solomon*, 75, 90.

⁴⁹ Translation is based on the Latin text established by W. W. Harvey, *Sancti Irenaei. Episcopi Lugdunensis. Libros quinque adversus Haereses* (Cambridge: Typis Academicis, 1857), II, 383-4.

kept in bonds, in order to burst the bonds of those in Hell and give them freedom.”⁵⁰

2. Phase Two: Conquest of Hades' Rulers

In Account “B” (*Teach. Silv.* 110, 22-24. 29-32) we learn that as part of his Decensus Christ “cast down every haughty tyrant” and “humbled the haughty powers”. It is tempting to associate their “haughtiness” with the notion of absolute power which the forces of Hades mistakenly assumed they had gained over the deceased Christ, as this is represented in Patristic accounts of the Decensus. The following texts are instructive for comparison: Orig, *Comm in Rom* V, 8, 10—Christ emptied himself, taking the servant’s form, and suffering the ‘rule of the tyrant’. By his death he (Christ) destroyed him who had power over death, the Devil, that He might free those held by Death. Binding the strong one, He went into Death’s house, Hades, and plundered his goods, i.e., drew forth the souls he held. As a result, the kingdom of Death is destroyed and its captives taken away. The “tyrant” and “enemy” Death will be destroyed in the End (1 Cor 15:26), but at present he is reduced to robbing, driven from his kingdom, wandering through deserts and byways, seeking the hand of the unbelieving;⁵¹ Aphraates, *Hom* 16:

“Then he (Jesus) . . . went to it (Death) and seized it, taking all his possessions . . . Thereupon the Powers of Darkness sat in mourning because Death was cast down from its sovereignty. And Death’s . . . hands grew slack, and it recognized that the dead lived and were freed from its dominion. Since he (Jesus) oppressed Death . . . it lamented and cried bitterly . . . and it was not sweet to it (Death) to swallow Jesus as all other deceased ones. It (Death) had no authority over the saints and could not abandon them to decay”⁵²

Eph Syr, *Pasch Cant*—Jesus set free the captives, laid waste Death’s camp, and took back the spoils. Death had previously boasted of

⁵⁰ Cited by J. A. MacCulloch, *The Harrowing of Hell*, 109, Cf., further, G. Horner, *The Statutes of the Apostles or Canones Ecclesiastici* (London: Oxford University, 1915). Statute 22, 140. Other texts speak of Christ loosening chains or bonds not from himself but from those incarcerated in Hades: e.g., Cl Al, *Strom* VI, 6: 45, 4; Hipp, *Comm in Dan* IV, 33; Iren, *Haer* III, 9, 3; Greg Thaum, *Hom Om Sanct* (ANF, XX p. 154); Ephr Syr, *Transfig Christ* 14.

⁵¹ The texts, which are too long to cite here, are offered in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* (Paris, 1860), IV, 1019, 1015.

⁵² Translation is adapted from J. Kroll, *Gott und Höll*, 69.

his universal power, but a mighty One had come without warning and spoiled his glory.⁵³

The forcible overthrow of the Underworld's powers is also frequently encountered in Patristic Decensus accounts. We offer just a few texts for comparison: *Odes Sol.* 22, 3—"He (the Father) . . . scattered my (Christ's) enemies, and my adversaries (in the Underworld)";⁵⁴ Hipp, *Antichr* 26—" . . . all power has been given to Christ . . . under the earth because he has been counted among the dead, . . . triumphing over Death by his death"; Orig, *Comm in Matt* 16, 8—In dying, Christ fools Satan into thinking he had succumbed in weakness. Satan introduces him to the darkest shadow of his empire where Christ defeats him, returning glorious from among the dead; Aphraates, *Hom* 14—" (Christ) went into Hell and led out its captives, and fought with Evil and vanquished it, and trampled upon it, and destroyed its traces, and stole its possessions. . ."⁵⁵

As regards the "sealing up of the (very) heart of the Underworld" (*Teach. Silv.* 104, 5-7), have we earlier noted a possible echo of Rev 20:1-3 here. However, this activity of a Redeemer is known from other texts as well: *Eth Enoch* X, 4-5—"Bind Azazel (the head of all evil angels) hand and foot, and cast him into darkness; and make an opening in the desert, which is Dudaël, and cast him therein. And place upon him the rough and jagged rocks, and cover him with darkness, and let him abide there for ever, and cover his face that he may not see light";⁵⁶ *2 Bar* 21, 23—(Baruch's prayer for God's final judgment) "And reprove the angel of death . . . and let Sheol be sealed so that from this time forward it may not receive the dead . . ."⁵⁷

Finally, with the assertion that all the powers of Hades "fled" when they saw Christ, we may compare a similar motif in the fol-

⁵³ For the full text, too lengthy to cite here, see H. Burgess, *Select Metrical Hymns and Homilies of Ephrem Syrus* (London: Todd, 1853), 77.

⁵⁴ Cited from J. Charlesworth, *Odes of Solomon*, 90.

⁵⁵ The translation is adapted from J. Kroll, *Gott und Höll*, 68. For further parallels to this feature of our tractate's Decensus accounts, see J. A. MacCulloch, "The Victory over Death and Hades," in *The Harrowing of Hell*, 227-39.

⁵⁶ Quoted from R. H. Charles, ed., *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), II, 193-4.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 494.

lowing: *Quaes Barth* I, 18-19 (Ms. H)—(Christ's arrival in Hades throws panic into its inhabitants): "... Hades answered, '... It cannot be but that God has come down. Woe is me! Where shall I flee before the face of the mighty God?'"'; ⁵⁸ Cyr H., *Catech Lect* IV, 11 (cf. XIV, 18. 19)—(Death is frightened by Christ's descent into Hades): "Wherefore, O ye porters of Hades, were ye afraid when ye saw Him? What was the unusual fear which struck you? Death fled, and his flight betrayed his cowardice." ⁵⁹

D. (104, 2-5. 10; cf. 110, 27-29) *The Purposes of the Decensus: The Release of the Captives*

The primary purpose for Christ's Decensus to this Hades/Earth has been to deliver its captives and transfer them to the state of salvation. The captives, who include the reader of the document ("you wretched one"—*Teach. Silv.* 104, 11-12), are variously described as "children of death" (104, 3), those "born in travail" (104, 3-4), the "poor" (110, 27), the "mourners" (110, 28). They have been held captive in the "Underworld" (104, 2. 6-7; 110, 20-21. 28-29) and the "Abyss" (104, 12; 110, 28), which may be a separate place of perdition below this Hades/Earth. ⁶⁰ Christ descends to these captives, "dying as a ransom for their sin" (104, 12-13), a "ransom" probably paid to Satan, as stated previously. The effect of this "ransoming" (and Christ's conquest of Hades) is that the captives are brought up from the Abyss (104, 10-12; 110, 27-29). In sum, Christ "saved (them) from the strong hand of the Underworld" (104, 13-14).

Patristic texts for comparison with this theme of deliverance in connection with the Saviour's Descensus are too numerous for treatment here. ⁶¹ Instead, we confine ourselves to citation of two

⁵⁸ Quoted from E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, I, 489.

⁵⁹ Quoted by J. A. MacCulloch, *The Harrowing of Hell*, 127.

⁶⁰ See note # 30, *supra*.

⁶¹ J. A. MacCulloch offers an extensive collection of them in his Chapter XVI, "The Release of Souls from Hades," in *The Harrowing of Hell*, 253-87. Those that have seemed especially interesting for comparison with *Teach. Silv.*, those which are not explicitly connected with the Eschaton, are as follows: *Odes Sol.* 17, 11-12; 42, 15-20; Cl Al, *Strom* VI, 6:45.4; *Prot XI*: 111, 1-2; *Exc Theod* 18, 2; Hipp, *Dav & Gol.* 11; Mel Sard, *Hom Pass* 40, 68; 61, 102; Iren, *Haer* III, 9, 3; Orig. *Hom in II Reg* (Migne, PG, XII, p. 1028);

types of parallels: those in which Christ's liberation of captives is specifically connected with his "ransoming" activity, and those in which his liberation of captives has meant their immediate transfer to salvation—both conceptions being found in *Teach. Silv.*

Four texts in particular connect the Decensus with Christ's "ransom". They are as follows: Orig (the most explicit of the four), *Comm in Matt* 16, 8:

"When he (Christ) gave his life as a ransom (λύτρος) for the lives of many, who was it he gave it to? He did not give it to God. Did he then, give it to the Devil? Yes, the Devil it was who had us in his power until he accepted the soul of Jesus as a ransom for us and thus allowed himself to be outwitted, as he thought he could lord it over that soul and did not see that he would never be able to keep a hold on it by his own efforts. Death thought it could lord it over him (cf. *Teach. Silv.* 110, 23-24), but it cannot do so now, because he is 'free among the dead' (Ps 87:6) and his power is greater than death's; so much so that if any of those in death's power want to follow him, they can . . .—over them, too, death can no longer prevail."⁶²

Further, we read in Hipp, *de Meg Od*: "He (Christ) who delivered out of the lowest Hades the first-formed man fallen from earth and bound in fetters of death; He who came down from above and raised up the fallen to the height (τὸν κάτω εἰς τὰ ὕψω) (cf. *Teach. Silv.* 110, 27-29); He who was the Preacher of the dead, the *Ransomer of souls* and the Resurrection of the dead . . . Himself the heavenly One, He bore the terrestrial on high."⁶³ The other two texts of relevance are as follows: Tert, *Fug in Pers*, c. 12—"The Lord *ransomed man* from the angels, the world-ruling powers, from the spirits of wickedness"; and Hipp, *Antichr* 45—"He (Christ) also . . . (became) a forerunner there (in Hades) when he was put to death by Herod, that there, too, He might intimate that the Saviour would descend *to ransom* souls of the saints from the hand of death." Clearly, then, *Teach. Silv.* stands in a larger tradition when it links Christ's Decensus with his being a ransom of the lost!

Several other texts bear evidence to the belief in the immediate

Comm in Matt XXVII, 50; *In Luc Hom* XXIV; *Hom VI in Ex* 6; *Comm in Rom* V; *Hom XV in Gen* 5; *Quaes Barth* 20-21; Aphraates, *Hom* 12; *Ev Nicod* V (XXI); VII (XXIII); VIII (XXIV).

⁶² Translation is from J. Daniélou, *Origen* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955), 272-3.

⁶³ Quoted from J. A. MacCulloch, *The Harrowing of Hell*, 96.

transference of souls from Hades to salvation by Christ, much as seems implied in the Decensus accounts in *Teach. Silv.* Cf. the following: *Odes Sol* 42, 15-20:

"And those who had died ran towards me; . . . they cried out and said, 'Son of God, have pity on us. And deal with us according to Thy kindnesses, and bring us out of the bonds of darkness. And open for us the door by which we may come out to Thee; for we perceive that our death (cf. *Teach. Silv.* 104, 3—'children of death') does not touch Thee. May we also be saved with Thee, because Thou art our Saviour?' Then I heard their voice . . . And I placed my name upon their heads, because they are free and they are mine"⁶⁴

Cf., also, Cl Al, *Strom* VI, 6—

"... the Lord descended to Hades for no other end but to preach the Gospel. . ." (46, 2) to both righteous Jews and pagans who had died prior to his coming. They had been captives, for they had "... been chained" and "... kept in confinement and prison" (45, 4). "Further, the Gospel (Matt 27:52) says, 'that many bodies of those that slept arose,'—plainly as having been translated to a better state. There took place then, a universal movement and a translation (μετάθεσις) through the economy of the Saviour" (47, 1).⁶⁵

Mel Sard, *Hom Pass* 61, 102—"It is I, 'says the Christ. 'It is I who have destroyed death . . . and who have transported man to the highest heaven'" ;⁶⁶ Orig, *Hom VI in Ex* 6—"Our Lord descended, not only to earth, but to the lower parts of the earth, and there He found us devoured and sitting in the shadow of death. Thence He led us forth, not to an earthly place to be again devoured, but He prepared for us a place in the kingdom of Heaven";⁶⁷ *Comm in Rom* V—(Christ "went into Death's House, Hades, and drew forth the souls which he held . . . ascending on high, he 'led captivity captive', that is, those who rose with Him and entered the Heavenly Jerusalem";⁶⁸ *Ev. Nicod* V (XXI)—(as Christ entered Hades) "... all the dead who were bound were loosened from their chains (cf. *Teach. Silv.* 110, 25-26), and we with them"; VII, (XXIII)—"And Hades took Satan and said to him: 'O Beelzebub, . . . through what

⁶⁴ Translation is from J. Charlesworth, *The Odes of Solomon*, 145-6.

⁶⁵ Translation is based on the Greek text of O. Stählin, *GCS*, II, 454-6.

⁶⁶ Adapted from M. Testuz, *Papyrus Bodmer XIII: Méliton de Sardes—Homélie sur la Pâque* (Cologny-Genève: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1960), 149.

⁶⁷ Quoted from J. A. MacCulloch, *The Harrowing of Hell*, 104-5.

⁶⁸ Translation is based on the text established by J. P. Migne, *PG*, IV, 1019.

necessity did you contrive that the King of Glory should be crucified, so that he should come here and strip us naked? Turn and see that not one dead man is left in me, but that all which you gained through the tree of knowledge you have lost through the tree of the Cross' ".⁶⁹

V. Conclusions

The foregoing investigation has provided a basis on which we may attempt to establish several conclusions about the Decensus motif in the *Teach. Silv.* from Nag Hammadi:

- (1) There are two accounts of the Decensus ad Inferos of Christ in the tractate (103, 28-104, 14 and 110, 18-111, 4), both of which identify the Decensus with Christ's Incarnation and this world with Hades.
- (2) While such a transposition might be thought a clear indication of Gnostic thinking, we have maintained that the non-dualistic theology and non-docetic Christology of the text rule against such an evaluation. Instead, this development seems the result of an ascetic tendency on the part of the author, which has been influenced by Jewish Christian views of the Saviour's disguised descent and a very negative experience with the world.
- (3) The two Decensus accounts have been held to derive from one common oral tradition, both displaying fundamental indebtedness to Ps 107 (106): 10-16.
- (4) When compared with other Decensus accounts in Patristic literature from the second to the fifth centuries A.D., the following have become clear:
 - (a) First, although some claim the most primitive element in the Christian Decensus motif was an emphasis on Jesus' sojourn in Hades as a Semitic way of stressing the reality of His death (as, e.g., in Ac 2:24, 31; Matt 12:40; Rom 10:7; Eph 4:9);⁷⁰ in *Teach. Silv.* Jesus' death receives very

⁶⁹ The translation is from E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, I, 473-75.

⁷⁰ This is the view of L. Letourneau, "Mythe ou réalité? La descente du Christ aux enfers aux 2e et 3e siècles," *Sciences Religieuses* III, 3 (1973/74), 249.

little notice (104, 12-13 and perhaps implied in the term "humility" in 110, 32 and 111, 3). This fact places our tractate closer to those few second and third century Decensus traditions in which Christ's death is given only minor attention (e.g., *Asc Is* IV, 21; XI, 19; *Sib Or* VIII, 310-12; Iren, *Haer* V, 31, 1; Orig, *Comm in Rom* V, 8).

- (b) Second, though another of the most primitive elements in the Decensus tradition was the Jewish Christian emphasis on Christ's preachment of the Gospel to the OT saints during his sojourn in Hades,⁷¹ this element seems completely lacking in *Teach. Silv.* Instead, primary stress is placed on Christ's conflict with and final victory over the powers of Hades—a Decensus motif first elaborated in the Hellenistic sphere of the Christian mission and given increasing emphasis in later accounts (e.g., *Quaes Barth*, *Ev Nicod*).⁷²
- (c) Third, in *Silv*, stress falls on the immediate deliverance and transferrance of Hades' captives through Christ's conquest. This emphasis, as opposed to that placed on the release of captives only at the Parousia, appears elsewhere only in late second and third century literature (e.g., in *Odes Sol.* 42, 15-20; Just, *Dial* LXXII, 4; Iren, *Haer* III, 20, 4; IV, 22, 1; IV, 33, 1. 12; V, 31, 1; Cl Al, *Strom* VI, 6:46, 1. 3; 47, 1; *Sib Orac* 309-17; Orig, *Hom in Reg*; *Comm in Matt* 27:50; *Hom 24 in Luc*; *Hom VI in Ex* 6; Mel Sard, *Hom Pass* 61, 102; *Ev Nicod* VII (XXIII); VIII (XXIV).)⁷³
- (d) Fourth, the linkage of Christ's "ransoming" captives from Hades and sin simultaneously in the context of the Decensus motif appears in *Teach. Silv.*, but elsewhere only in late second or early third century writers (e.g., Orig, Hipp of Rome, Tert). According to MacCulloch (*The Har-*

⁷¹ That this was actually the oldest element in the tradition is maintained by F. Loofs, "Descent to Hades (Christ's)," *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. J. Hastings (New York: Scribner's, 1912), IV, 661b; and J. Daniélou, *Theology of Jewish Christianity*, 233-35. Cf., further, *Ev Pet* 41-42; Just, *Dial* 72; *Or Sib* I, 360-400; VII, 310-12.

⁷² J. Kroll (*Gott und Hölle*, 5) has shown that this emphasis on conflict was first elaborated in the Gentilic/Hellenistic sphere of Christian missions.

⁷³ See, further, on this notion of "realized eschatology" associated with the Decensus, Letourneau, SC III, 3 (1973/74), 250-1.

rowing of Hell, p. 200), Orig is believed to have been the first theologian to make this connection.

- (e) Fifth, as the Decensus tradition develops from the second to the fifth century, there is evolving, dramatic development of central characters and their actions (e.g., personified Hades and Satan, etc.). This seems the result of considerable homiletic development of the tradition.⁷⁴ Certainly, in the case of *Teach. Silv.* its version of the Decensus is more developed than that found in the *Apoc Pet*, *Asc Isa*, and even Cl Al. On the other hand, it is not nearly so developed as the Decensus in *Quaes Barth* (3rd century), Ephr Syr (ob. 373 A.D.), Aphraates (c. 350 A.D.), *Ev Nicod* (ca. late 4th or early 5th century).

Cumulatively, then, evidence points toward the late second or early third century as the probably date of the *Teach. Silv.*, with the balance of probability shifting toward the latter

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⁷⁴ So J. Kroll, *Gott und Hölle*, 74-5.

THE LEGEND OF THE LION-ROARER:
A Study of the Buddhist Arhat Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja

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It was not long after the Buddha passed away into Parinirvāṇa in the fifth century B.C. that myths and legends began to multiply about him. Sites associated with the smallest incidents of his career soon became centers of pilgrimage, and centers of pilgrimage perhaps not previously connected to him soon became so, spawning new stories about his life. But Gautama Buddha was not the only one to receive the attention of the myth-makers of the tradition. In the centuries that followed, Buddhist preachers and specialist monks called *avadānikas* recounted and ornamented the lives and past lives of his disciples and successors as well. They created a vast literature of their legendary deeds (*avadānas*) and previous births (*jātakas*), and their stories were incorporated into canonical texts and commentaries and compiled into special collections.¹

Before long, many of the Buddha's disciples came to be given set features, stereotypes that quickly become tradition and were then played out in limited variations but in countless legends and stories. One of the classic listings of these stereotypes occurs in the Theravāda *Anguttara Nikāya*, where the various prominent disciples of the Buddha are each described as being "foremost" in a particular quality or activity. Thus, Sariputta is "foremost of those of great wisdom"; Mahā Moggallāna is "foremost of those with supernormal powers," and Mahā Kassapa of those "who maintain the meticulous observance of forms."² The eighth place on this listing is occupied by a figure who forms the subject of this paper: Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, a disciple whom the Buddha declared to be "foremost of lion-roarers."³

¹ For a general survey of this literature, see Maurice Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, trans. Mrs. S. Ketkar (Calcutta: University of Calcutta), vol. 2, pp. 277-94.

² *The Anguttara Nikāya* [hereafter abbreviated as A], ed. Richard Morris (London: Pali Text Society, 1885), vol. 1, p. 23. Cf. *The Book of Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya) or More-Numbered Suttas*, trans. Frank L. Woodward, 5 vols., Pali Text Society Translation Series, vols. 22, 24-27 (London: Oxford University Press, 1932-36), 1: 16-17.

³ *Ibid.*

In what follows it is my intention to examine the full scope of the traditions and stories which surround this personage. I want to focus especially on his legend as it developed in India (since this has not been studied before to any great extent) and consider it in relation to his cult as it is found in China.⁴ In so doing I hope that two things will be accomplished. The first of these is that a contribution will be made to the study of Indian Buddhist hagiography. This field has been much neglected by Western scholars, perhaps because biography is not particularly featured in Indian Buddhist sources, a situation which, it might be pointed out, is the exact reverse of that found in China where our knowledge of the history and practice of Buddhism is virtually dominated by biographical information and the lives of eminent monks.

Secondly, it is hoped that some contribution will be made to the study of popular cultic activities in Buddhism, especially those involving meritorious acts of offering to members of the Buddhist community. We still know far too little about the popular practice of Buddhists in India, both lay and monastic, and about the ideologies and mythologies which accompany that practice. Doctrinal texts, manuals of meditation, the philosophies of various schools are all, of course, crucial sources for our study of Indian Buddhism, but to understand the everyday popular practices such as merit making and cultic acts, there is a crying need to keep turning to the sources which can most help us in this regard: the Sanskrit *avadānas* and the Pāli commentaries. In the case of Piṇḍola, it is only by comparing these materials with what we know of the development of his legend and cult in Chinese sources that it becomes possible to gain a better focus on the figure himself and on his overall significance in the popular mythology of Buddhism.

Piṇḍola's popularity in East Asia is well known and a number of studies have been devoted specifically to him.⁵ As the most important

⁴ For the Chinese sources on Piṇḍola I will be heavily indebted to Sylvain Lévi and Edouard Chavannes, "Les seize arhat protecteurs de la loi," *Journal asiatique* 8 (1916): 205-75.

⁵ In addition to Lévi and Chavannes, see Marinus Willem De Visser, "The Arhats in China and Japan," *Ost-asiatische Zeitschrift* 10 (1922/23): 71-80; Minakata Kumagusu, "The Wandering Jew," *Notes and Queries*, 9th. series, 4 (1899): 121-24; Mochizuki Shinkō, *Bukkyō daijiten* (Tokyo, 1954), s.v. "Bin-zuru Harada."

of the sixteen (or eighteen) great arhats (Ch. *lo-han*, Tib. *gNas brtan*, Jap. *rakan*), his image appears in countless Buddhist sanctuaries in China, Tibet and Japan.⁶

The cult of the sixteen arhats has its textual roots in Nandimitra's *Record of the Abiding of the Dharma* translated by Hsüan-tsang in 654.⁷ According to this text, the elder Nandimitra, when he was about to die, "eight hundred years after the Buddha's Parinirvāṇa," assembled all the monks of Lanka to his death bed and consoled them with a sermon. The Buddha, he claimed, just before entering Parinirvāṇa, entrusted the good Dharma to sixteen great arhats and instructed them to protect it until the end of the present world period.

In order to carry out this mandate, these arhats all extended their life-spans by means of their supernatural powers, and even now are acting as ready fields of merit, and constantly maintaining the good teaching. It is not until the end of the final period of the Law that they will enter Parinirvāṇa themselves, after assembling all the relics of the Buddha's body in a great stūpa made of seven gems which will then sink and disappear into the earth. At that moment the Dharma of Śākyamuni will have been extinguished forever, and the way cleared for the eventual arrival of Maitreya.⁸

⁶ For descriptions and pictures of Piṇḍola and the 16/18 arhats, see Thomas Watters, "The Eighteen Lohan of Chinese Buddhist Temples," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1898, pp. 329-47; George N. Roerich, "Le Bouddha et seize grands arhats, suite de sept bannières de la province de Kham au Tibet," *Revue des arts asiatiques* 6 (1929/30): 94-100; Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1949), pp. 550-70 + plate 166; Eugen Pander, *Das Pantheon des Tschangtscha Hutuktu. Ein Beitrag zur Iconographie des Lamaismus* (Berlin: W. Spemann, 1890), pp. 83 ff.; Albrecht Grünwedel, *Mythologie des Buddhismus in Tibet unter der Mongolei* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1900), pp. 7, 35 ff.; and especially Loden Sherap Daggyab, *Tibetan Religious Art* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1977), pp. 102-105. See also Joseph Edkins, *Chinese Buddhism* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, and Co., 1893), p. 242; Basil Hall Chamberlain, *A Handbook for Travellers in Japan* (London: John Murray, 1907), pp. 44, 132; Mochizuki, p. 4334. For Piṇḍola in Vietnam, see Louis Bezacier, "Le panthéon des pagodes bouddhiques du Tonkin," *Samādhi* 8 (1974): 32.

⁷ The Chinese title is *Ta A-lo-han Nan-t'i-mi-to-lo so shuo fa chu chi* (Taishō Tripiṭaka No. 2030, vol. 49, p. 13a). The Sanskrit original is lost. Complete translations may be found in French in Lévi and Chavannes, pp. 6-24, and in English in Shan Shih Buddhist Institute, comp., *The Sixteen and the Eighteen Arhats* (Peking: Buddhist Association of China, 1961). Excerpts may also be found in English in De Visser, pp. 60-64.

⁸ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 13; De Visser, p. 64.

Nandimitra, however, is more immediately interested in the figures of the sixteen arhats themselves. Of these, Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja is named first; he resides with one thousand followers, all of them enlightened arhats, in Aparā-Godanī in the West.⁹ Along with the other fifteen lo-han (who are all named and assigned their places in the cosmological scheme) he maintains the teaching of the Buddha in this manner:

All those who show their devoutness by great liberality towards the Buddhist clergy, in arranging large meetings for distribution of drink and food (to the monks), in presenting temples, images, and sutra-flags, and in giving chairs and beds, clothes and medicine, food and drink to the monks of the monasteries, they shall all obtain the greatest rewards by the intermedium of the Sixteen Great Arhats, "who with all their followers according to their tasks go (to those places where those virtuous actions are performed) and appear in all kinds of shapes, hiding their holy attitude and being like the common crowd, and secretly receiving the offerings, thus causing the donors to obtain the reward of the victorious fruit."¹⁰

Some doubts have arisen as to whether this text of Nandimitra's sermon was actually translated by Hsüan-tsang, or indeed whether there was ever any Sanskrit original of it at all. Neither Hsüan-tsang's *Memoirs* nor his biography make any mention of the text or, for that matter, of the sixteen arhats, nor is the same group ever found listed as such in extant Sanskrit and Pāli materials. Sylvain Lévi and Edouard Chavannes, however, have effectively dismissed these doubts by examining various early Chinese catalogs of the Tripiṭaka in which the work is consistently listed; they conclude that the translation was most assuredly an authentic one.¹¹ The discovery of a Khotanese version of Nandimitra's work only confirms their opinion, as does a fragment of a different Khotanese sūtra which contains the same listing of sixteen arhats.¹² Moreover, the fascinating formulaic "confessions of sins" in the Uighur language which were uncovered at the turn of the century in Turfan but of which Lévi and Chavannes were

⁹ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 10; De Visser, p. 62.

¹⁰ De Visser, pp. 62-63; cf. Lévi and Chavannes, pp. 11-12.

¹¹ Lévi and Chavannes, pp. 24-25.

¹² See Ernst Leumann, "Buddhistische Literatur Nordarisch und Deutsch," *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 15 (1920): 1-179, esp. p. 167; and Sten Konow, "Fragments of a Buddhist Work in the Ancient Aryan Language of Chinese Turkistan," *Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 5 (1914): 13-41.

apparently unaware further demonstrates the popularity of Piṇḍola and the sixteen arhats in Central Asia.¹³

Nevertheless it is clear from the date that Nandimitra's text assigns itself (at least eight hundred years after the Parinirvāṇa),¹⁴ and from the fact that Hsüan-tsang was the first (and only) one to translate it into Chinese (in 654) that the tradition and cult of the sixteen arhats was a late bloomer in China, and probably in India as well.¹⁵

As a distinct, separate figure, however, Piṇḍola was well known in both countries long before the group of the sixteen arhats of which he was later a member. We have already seen that he appears on the list of the Buddha's leading disciples in the *Anguttara Nikāya*. He is also given a whole sutta in the *Samyutta Nikāya*,¹⁶ while in the Vinayas of at least five different schools, a famous story about his gratuitous performance of a supernatural feat is recounted.¹⁷ In the

¹³ See the confessions of sins of the two *upāsikās* Ūtrāt and Qutlug in W. K. Müller, *Uigurica II* (= Abhandlungen der Königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, 1910, part 3), pp. 76-89, esp. pp. 79 and 88, lines 67-68. The latter passage runs as follows: "In agreement with the teaching of the Buddhas of all three times who are as numerous as the sands of the river Ganges, and in the presence of the Venerable Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja (Pintolabardvīdā) and the sixteen great disciples, in the presence of Maitreya Bodhisattva who lives in the Tuṣṭita Palace ... in the presence of all beings in the five realms of existence, humbling myself, I pray to become pure and free and respectfully implore forgiveness."

¹⁴ It is next to impossible to determine what date this might actually correspond to. Lévi and Chavannes (p. 26) mention a chronology used by Hsüan-tsang in which King Kaniška (whose own dating is very problematical) is placed at 400 years after the Parinirvāṇa. This might put Nandimitra c. 520; but this is highly speculative.

¹⁵ There is a reference to Piṇḍola and "the sixteen venerable disciples" in the *Mahāyānāvataṛa-sāstra* [Ju Ta-shing lun] which was translated into Chinese by Tao-t'ai (357-439), but few details are given, and apart from Rahula, the other arhats are not even named. See Lévi and Chavannes, pp. 202-203, and De Visser, p. 64.

¹⁶ *Samyutta-Nikāya* [hereafter abbreviated as S], ed. Léon Feer (London: Pali Text Society, 1894), part 4, pp. 110-13. Cf. *The Book of the Kindred Sayings (Samyutta Nikāya) or Grouped Suttas*, trans. F. L. Woodward, Pali Text Society Translation Series, vol. 14 (London: Pali Text Society, 1927), part 4, pp. 68-70.

¹⁷ All five have been translated in Lévi and Chavannes, pp. 233-47. The same tale is also found in the *Sutta-Nipāta Commentary, Paramatthajotikā II* [hereafter SnA], ed. Helmer Smith (London: Pali Text Society, 1917), vol. 2, p. 570; *The Jātaka* [hereafter J], ed. V. Fausbøll, 5 vols., (London, 1877-87), 4:263 (cf. *The Jātaka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, ed. E. B. Cowell, 6 vols., [vol. 4 trans. W. H. D. Rouse] [orig. pub., 1895, reprint ed.,

Aśokāvadāna he is said to come to King Aśoka's great festival of merit.¹⁸ Verses are attributed to him in several canonical Pāli texts,¹⁹ and accounts of his previous lives occur in the Pāli commentaries,²⁰ as well as in the Sanskrit *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*.²¹ Moreover his name appears on the various lists of the Buddha's disciples found in the great Mahāyāna sūtras.²²

London: Luzac and Co., 1969], vol. 4, p. 166); and, in a greatly expanded form in *The Commentary on the Dhammapada* [hereafter DhA], ed. H. C. Norman (London: Pali Text Society, 1912), vol. 3, pp. 199-203 (cf. *Buddhist Legends*, trans. Eugene Watson Burlingame, Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 30 [orig. ed., 1921; reprint ed., London: Luzac and Co., 1969], part 3, pp. 35-38).

¹⁸ *The Aśokāvadāna*, ed. Sujitkumar Mukhopadhyaya (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1963), pp. 96 ff. Cf. Eugène Burnouf, *Introduction à l'histoire du Bouddhisme indien*, 2nd. ed. (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1876), pp. 353 ff.

¹⁹ *The Apadāna* [hereafter Ap], ed. Mary E. Lilley (London: Pali Text Society, 1925), vol. 1, pp. 50-51; *Paramattha-Dīpanī Theragāthā-Aṭṭhakathā* [hereafter ThagA], ed. Frank L. Woodward, 3 vols., (London: Pali Text Society, 1940-59) 2: 5 (cf. *The Elders' Verses, I. Theragāthā*, trans. K. R. Norman, Pali Text Society Translation Series, vol. 38 [London: Luzac and Co., 1969], p. 17, verses 123-24); *The Milindapañho* [hereafter Mln] ed. V. Trenckner (London: Williams and Norgate, 1880), pp. 393, 404 (cf. *The Questions of King Milinda*, trans. T. W. Rhys Davids, Sacred Books of the East, vol. 36 [orig. ed., 1894; reprint ed., New York: Dover, 1963], part 2, pp. 335, 346).

²⁰ *The Manorathapūraṇī* [Commentary on the *Anguttara Nikāya*, hereafter AA], ed. Max Walleser and Edmund Hardy (London: Pali Text Society, 1924), vol. 1, pp. 196-99; ThagA, vol. 2, pp. 4-6; *Visuddhajanavilāsini nāma Apadāna-Aṭṭhakathā* [Commentary on the *Apadāna*, hereafter ApA], ed. C. E. Godakumbura (London: Pali Text Society, 1954), pp. 300-302.

²¹ The text edited by Nalinaksha Dutt (*Gilgit Manuscripts*, Kashmir Series of Texts and Studies, no. 71 (E) [Srinagar, 1947], vol. 3, part 1, pp. 183-84) should be supplemented by Heinz Bechert, *Bruchstücke buddhistischer Versammlungen: die Anavataptagāthā und die Sthaviragāthā*, Sanskrittexte aus den Turfanfunden Nr. 6 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1961), pp. 130-33. Cf. also Marcel Hofinger, *Le congrès du Lac Anavatapta (vies de saints bouddhiques) Extrait du Vinaya des Mūlasarvāstivādin Bhaiṣajyavastu*, Bibliothèque du Muséon, vol. 34 (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1954), pp. 212-15.

²² *Saddharmapūṇḍarikasūtram*, ed. P. L. Vaidya, Buddhist Sanskrit Texts, no. 6 (Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1960), p. 1 (cf. *Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka or The Lotus of the True Law*, trans. Hendrik Kern, Sacred Books of the East, vol. 21 [orig. ed., 1884; reprint ed., New York: Dover, 1963], p. 2). In addition to the *Lotus*, he is said to be in the Buddha's entourage in various Pure Land sūtras. See, for example, *Sukhāvatī-vyūha*, ed. F. Max Müller and Bunyiu Nanjio, Anecdota Oxoniensa, Aryan Series, vol. 1, part 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883), p. 92 (cf. F. Max Müller, tr., *The Smaller Sukhāvatī-vyūha* in E. B. Cowell, ed. *Buddhist Mahāyāna Texts*, Sacred Books of the East, vol. 49 [orig. pub., 1894; reprint ed., New York: Dover, 1969], part 2, p. 90); and Yamada Isshi, ed. *Karunāpūṇḍarīka*, 2 vols. (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1968) 2: 2. In the *Karmavibhaṅga*, Piṇḍola appears in a list

In China and Japan, he enjoyed a separate cult primarily as the guardian saint of monasteries' refectories.²³ This tradition, which can be traced at least as far back as the time of Tao-an (314-85),²⁴ was fixed in detail in the middle of the fifth century when Hui-chien translated the ritual specifications contained in the *Method of Inviting Piṇḍola* [Ch'ing Pin-t'ou-lu fa].²⁵ It received imperial support in 490 when Emperor Wu of the soon to be created Liang Dynasty was reportedly cured of a serious illness as a result of great offerings made to Piṇḍola,²⁶ and it was the subject of a long descriptive article by Tao-shih in the middle of the seventh century.²⁷ The cult of Piṇḍola was thus widespread in China and continued on up to the modern period, despite some opposition by the Tantric master Amoghavajra who, in 769, petitioned the throne requesting that Piṇḍola's image be replaced in all the refectories of the empire by that of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.²⁸

of arhats who convert different countries; see *Mahākarmavibhanga* (*la grande classification des actes*) et *Karmavibhangopadeśa* (*discussion sur le Mahākarmavibhanga*), ed. and trans. Sylvain Lévi (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1932), p. 62 (text), p. 131 (tr.). In the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* he appears in a list of eight great śrāvakas which parallels lists of eight bodhisattvas and eight pratyekabuddhas; see *Aryamañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, ed. T. Gaṇapati Sāstrī, 3 vols., Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, vols. 70, 76, 84 (Trivandrum, 1920-25), 1:111.

²³ Mochizuki, p. 4334; Kenneth K.S. Ch'en, *Buddhism in China* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 101.

²⁴ Arthur Link, "The Biography of Shih Tao-an," *T'oung pao* 46 (1958): 35. See also E. Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972) pp. 94, 391, n. 73. Henri Maspero (*Mélanges posthumes sur les religions et l'histoire de la Chine*, 2. *Le Taoïsme* [Paris: Civilisations du Sud, 1950], p. 191) claims that even before that the Taoist Yellow Turbans had confused images depicting Piṇḍola with the figure of Lao-tzu. This is unlikely, however, since the first image of Piṇḍola is elsewhere explicitly said to have been made only in 470 (see Lévi and Chavannes, p. 220).

²⁵ Taishō Tripitaka No. 1689, vol. 32, p. 784 b-c, translated in Lévi and Chavannes, pp. 216 ff.

²⁶ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 220.

²⁷ The article was incorporated in his *Fa yuan chu lin* (comp. 668) and is translated in Lévi and Chavannes, pp. 205-13.

²⁸ The text of the petition may be found in Taishō Tripitaka No. 2120, vol. 52, p. 837a-b. The incident is also recounted in Vajrabodhi's biography where, however, Piṇḍola is confused with the arhat Kauṇḍinya. The petition was granted but does not seem to have been implemented fully throughout the country (see Chou Yi-liang, "Tantrism in China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 8 [1944/45]: 297, n. 63). In certain large centers, however, it may have been carried out. For example, the Japanese pilgrim Ennin has this to say about his visit to a temple on Mt. Wu-t'ai: "At noon we went to the dining hall for

In Japan, where Piṇḍola (Jap. Binzuru) was also worshipped as patron of the monastic refectories, he took on the additional dimension of being a popular healing saint. Sick and diseased laypersons would flock to images of Binzuru and rub on the image the spot corresponding to the place of pain on their own body, while praying for a cure.²⁹ Especially famous in this regard seems to have been the image of Binzuru at the Sensōji in Tokyo.³⁰ In recent times these images of Binzuru in Japan have been prohibited by the government because they were thought to spread disease.³¹

If I have extended myself in mentioning all of these sources here (many of which we shall be considering below), it is because, though all of them concern Piṇḍola directly, none of them so much as mention the list of the sixteen arhats. It is rather surprising then that with but one exception all of the previous scholars who have discussed Piṇḍola have done so in the context of those sixteen arhats and their cult. This in itself is not necessarily wrong, but it is to approach the question backwards, for it is evident that many of the traditions surrounding the group as a whole should be seen as developments from those concerning Piṇḍola rather than vice-versa.

The one exception who has not approached Piṇḍola in this way is Jean Przyluski. In "L'Ecole de Kauṣāmbī et la légende de Piṇḍola," which forms the fourth chapter of his *Légende de l'empereur Aśoka*, he pays little attention to the tradition of the sixteen arhats and claims instead that Piṇḍola was a famous elder of the Buddhist community at Kauṣāmbī. In fact, he goes so far as to claim that the whole story of Piṇḍola in the *Aśokāvadāna* represents an interpolation of the local interests of the Buddhists of Kauṣāmbī wishing to promote their own favorite son.³²

Przyluski's overall argument in this work is that it is possible to

our forenoon meal. We saw an image of Monju placed in the seat of the head monk but did not see Binzuru [Piṇḍola] in any seat. Surprised at this we asked the monks, and they said the various paintings [sic] in the mountain were like this." See Edwin O Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary, The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law* (New York: Ronald Press, 1955), pp. 226-27. I would like to thank Charles Orzech for these references.

²⁹ Mochizuki, p. 4334; Minakata, p. 123.

³⁰ Chamberlain, p. 132.

³¹ *Nihon kokugo daijiten* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 1975), s.v. "Binzuru."

³² Jean Przyluski, *La légende de l'empereur Aśoka (Aśoka-avadāna) dans les textes indiens et chinois* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1923), p. 75.

detect various layers in the development of the Aśoka legend by distinguishing the passages which feature different Buddhist elders such as Yaśas, Upagupta, and Piṇḍola, each of whom, according to his scheme, was the leader of and represents the interests of a particular Buddhist community. Thus Yaśas is associated with the Kukkuṭārāma in Pāṭaliputra, Upagupta with the community at Mathurā and Piṇḍola with that of Kauśāmbī. The legend of each of these figures reflects, according to Przyluski, the local traditions of their own communities: "Pour projeter sur les origines de l'Eglise de Kauśāmbī l'éclat d'une renommée ... il fallait un saint patron qui fût pour cette communauté ce qu'était Upagupta pour la confrérie de Mathurā. Ce personnage fut Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja ... Comme on le voit, les écrivains de Kauśāmbī en ont usé avec Piṇḍola de la même manière que ceux de Mathurā à l'égard d'Upagupta."³³

The attempt to detect local traditions operative within the overall text is, I think, a commendable one. Unfortunately Przyluski's argument here that these elders were primarily thought of as associated with particular communities is not convincing. As I have sought to show elsewhere, when the total tradition about Upagupta is taken into consideration, it can hardly be said that he is primarily associated with the city of Mathurā,³⁴ and the same is true here of Piṇḍola's connection with Kauśāmbī. Przyluski's claim that "la légende est constante qui rattache Piṇḍola au pays de Kauśāmbī,"³⁵ is simply incorrect. The most famous story of Piṇḍola—his display of magical powers in front of the laity—is consistently portrayed as taking place at Rājagṛha.³⁶ In the *Aśokāvadāna* itself, Piṇḍola is said to be dwelling on Mount Gandhamādana, and he comes to Aśoka's assembly which is in Pāṭaliputra.³⁷ In the *Udāna*, which represents one of the oldest strata of the Pāli canon, Piṇḍola is pictured as dwelling at the Jetavana near Sāvattī (Skt. Śrāvastī).³⁸

³³ Ibid., pp. 75-76.

³⁴ John Strong, "Making Merit in the Aśokāvadāna: A Study of Buddhist Acts of Offering in the Post-Parinirvāṇa Age," PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1977, pp. 17-18.

³⁵ Przyluski, p. 75.

³⁶ This is the case in all of the sources cited in n. 17 above, with the exception of the *Mahīśāsaka Vinaya* in which the event is said to take place in Vaiśālī. See Lévi and Chavannes, p. 238.

³⁷ *Aśokāvadāna*, p. 100. Cf. Burnouf, p. 356.

³⁸ *Udānam* [hereafter Ud], ed. Paul Steinthal (London: Pali Text Society,

In fact, it appears that, in the case of Piṇḍola, Przyluski's whole construct is based on only two stories. The first of these appears in the *Theragāthā Commentary* where Piṇḍola is said to have been reborn as the son of the chaplain of King Udena of Kosambī (Skt. Kauśāmbī). An examination of the full text of this story,³⁹ however, reveals that it is not particularly interested in the relation of Piṇḍola, Udena and Kosambī. It is rather concerned with making the point that Piṇḍola was a learned Brahmin with a bad reputation before he was converted to Buddhism.⁴⁰ The identical point is made in the *Anguttara Nikāya Commentary's* version of the story where, however, no mention is made of King Udena, and the whole tale is pictured as taking place in Rājagaha (Skt. Rājagṛha).⁴¹

The second story which Przyluski adduces in support of his theory is the account of a dialogue between Piṇḍola and this same King Udena which takes place in the royal park near Kosambī.⁴² The commentary on this passage⁴³, however, portrays it as an incidental meeting that took place when Piṇḍola was actually dwelling in Sāvattihī, and just happened to fly to Udena's park near Kosambī in order

1885), pp. 42-43. Cf. *Udāna: Verses of Uplift*, trans. F. L. Woodward, Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon, Part 2, Sacred Books of the Buddhists, vol. 8 (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 50-51.

³⁹ To do Przyluski justice, it must be stated that his knowledge of the commentary was based on Mrs. Rhys Davids's remarks in her translation of the *Theragāthā* verses (see *Psalm of the Brethren*, trans. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Pali Text Society Translation Series, vol. 4 [London: H. Frowde, 1913], pp. 110-111). Since that time, however, the full text of the *Theragāthā Commentary* has been published.

⁴⁰ ThagA, p. 4.

⁴¹ AA, 1: 198. Two other accounts are less specific and tell us that he was a Brahmin but fail to mention where. See A, p. 50, and the *Paramattha-Dīpanī Udanatthakathā* [Commentary on the *Udāna*, hereafter UdA], ed. F. L. Woodward (London: Pali Text Society, 1954), p. 252. In only one other version of the story is any mention made of Kosambī (see ApA, p. 300).

⁴² S, 4: 110-13 (cf. *Kindred Sayings*, 4: 68-70). Their conversation touches on the subject of Buddhist monks' discipline. The king wants to know how it is that young monks in the full vigor of youth can stay on the Buddhist path and resist dalliance with the passions. After a number of answers which do not satisfy Udena, Piṇḍola finally tells him that it is by meditation on the senses and sense objects. This pleases the king who then takes refuge in the Triple Gem.

⁴³ Sārattha-ppakāsinī. *Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Saṃyutta-Nikāya* [hereafter SA], ed. F. L. Woodward (London: Pali Text Society, 1932), 2: 393.

"to spend the noon-day heat in a cool spot on the bank of the Ganges." ⁴⁴

These points against Przyłuski's interpretation of Piṇḍola are important because, on the one hand, there has been a widespread tendency simply to accept his view that Piṇḍola was the "apostle of Kauśāmbī," ⁴⁵ and, on the other hand, this kind of localization detracts from a proper understanding of Piṇḍola's legend and cult in the overall Buddhist tradition.

The texts which associate Piṇḍola and King Udena should not be ignored, of course, nor should his connection with the sixteen arhats; but these, as we shall see, are only parts of a much larger picture. In what follows, therefore, I would first like to present the many and sometimes contradictory stories about Piṇḍola. I have sought to organize them under a number of different headings. First come several themes which are all related to stories of Piṇḍola when he was the disciple of the Buddha: (a) his reputation for gluttony which

⁴⁴ Kosambī is actually on the bank of the Yamunā a ways west of where it flows into the Ganges—a further indication, perhaps, that those who made up this story were little concerned with that city. In two other versions of this tale, Piṇḍola is explicitly said to return to Rājagaha after this meeting. (See SnA, p. 515 and J, 4 : 375). The gist of the story of their encounter is as follows: While Piṇḍola is spending his noontime meditation in the shade of a tree, King Udena (who has been drinking heavily) comes to the park with his harem. He lies down on a seat spread for him and quickly falls asleep with his head in a maid servant's lap. The other dancing girls take the opportunity to wander off through the park, picking flowers and eating fruit. Eventually they come across Piṇḍola and saluting him they sit down. He comes out of his trance and begins to preach a dharmic sermon suitable to the occasion. In the meantime, King Udena wakes up and, furious at not seeing his harem, asks the maid servant where they have gone. She answers that they are with a śramaṇa. In a fit of jealous rage, Udena jumps up and vows he will have Piṇḍola devoured by red ants. There then follows a slapstick scene in which Udena climbs a tree to get an ants' nest, but misses a branch on the way down and falls to the ground with the ants' nest breaking open on his head. This alerts Piṇḍola who decides to fly off by means of his supernatural powers. The women of the harem are not at all sympathetic with Udena. Pretending to wipe the ants off of his body, they actually put them back on, blaming him all the while for suspecting and wanting to hurt an enlightened wandering monk. Udena finally realizes his mistake and instructs his park keeper to tell him when and if Piṇḍola should ever return. A few days later he does; Udena approaches him respectfully and there follows the dialog that is recorded in the *Samyutta Nikāya* sutta.

⁴⁵ See, for example, Etienne Lamotte, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien*, Bibliothèque du Muséon, vol. 43 (Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, 1958), p. 768.

is related to the meaning of his name, (b) his lion's roar, and (c) his performance of a supernatural feat. Then, secondly, I shall consider some stories which take Piṇḍola (and us) beyond the time of the Buddha: (a) his not being allowed to enter Parinirvāṇa, (b) his cult, and (c) his meeting with King Aśoka. All of these stories will provide insights that will then allow some general conclusion about the significance of this interesting figure.

Piṇḍola's name and his reputation for gluttony

Piṇḍola's rather curious name has been the topic of some discussion, and it is useful to look into the matter here. His second name, Bhāradvāja (also spelled Bharadvāja) is simply that of the Brahmanical gotra to which he belonged and poses no particular problem.⁴⁶ His personal name, however, has caught the interest of classical commentators and modern scholars alike. The first part of it clearly consists of the word *piṇḍa* meaning "lump (of food)" and, in the Buddhist context, referring specifically to alms food such as that which is offered to a monk.

Buddhaghosa offers a folk etymology for the name as a whole, deriving it from *piṇḍa* + *ulati* ("to go"), thus giving the image of a man who goes for alms. This, of course, would be a characteristic of all Buddhist monks, but the implication here is that Piṇḍola goes for alms with a particular persistence and zest: "*Desiring* alms (*piṇḍa*) he goes (*ulati*)."⁴⁷ The English translation "alms go-getter," then, would perhaps best describe this understanding of his name. These not very flattering overtones would seem substantiated in at least two Pāli texts in which the word *piṇḍola* apparently designated a term of abuse used by laypeople: "This is a curse here below: you alms go-getter (*piṇḍola*)! You wander with bowl in hand!"⁴⁸

We will have more to say on Piṇḍola's name later on, but in the

⁴⁶ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 232. There were a number of different monks by that name in the early Buddhist community. See *Buddha's Teachings* [Suttanipāta], ed. and trans. Robert Chalmers, Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 37 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), index, s.v. "Bhāradvāja."

⁴⁷ SA, 2: 393. The same etymology is found in UdA, p. 252.

⁴⁸ S, 3: 93 (cf. *Kindred Sayings*, 3: 78); *Itivuttaka*, ed. E. Windisch (London: Pali Text Society, 1889), p. 89 (cf. *Itivuttaka: As It was Said*, trans. F. L. Woodward, Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon, part 2, Sacred Books of the Buddhists, vol. 8 [London: Oxford University Press, 1948], p. 180.

context presented thus far it is easy to see how a number of Pāli stories should have developed the theme of Piṇḍola being a gluttonous monk whose chief preoccupation was the consumption of food.

In the *Theragāthā Commentary*, for example, we are told the following story:

In the time of the Buddha Gotama, Piṇḍola was reborn as the son of a Brahmin. When he came of age, he learned the three vedas and taught the mantras to five hundred youths. But being gluttonous by nature he did not behave suitably; [his disciples] therefore forsook him and he went to Rājagaha. There he saw the gain and honor of the Bhikkhu-sangha, and so became ordained into the Buddhist religion. Immoderate in food he wandered for alms, but the Master, by good means, established him in temperance. And having quickly achieved *vipassana*, he was endowed with the six supernatural powers [and became an arhat].⁴⁹

The same tale occurs in the *Anguttara Nikāya Commentary* where a few colorful details have been added. While he was still a Brahmin, we are told, Piṇḍola used to ask to receive personally the alms supposedly destined for his five hundred disciples and would go repeatedly to houses where he had already been served and wait there inquiring "Where is the food? Where is the rice-milk?"⁵⁰ However, in this text as well, once he enters the Sangha, the Buddha soon cures him of these gluttonous habits.

This point is of some significance. In the Pāli commentaries, Piṇḍola is consistently portrayed as becoming a Buddhist monk because he realizes that members of the community receive a lot of food. Once in the sangha, however, he is converted to the ways of temperance. The "good means" by which the Buddha cures him of his gluttony is the subject of another story:

Indeed [Piṇḍola] was a Brahmin come on hard times. Perceiving the gain and honor of the Bhikkhu-sangha, he retired from the world for the sake of alms and was ordained. He then took a large⁵¹ begging bowl and wandered for alms; he drank rice-milk by the bowlful, consumed edibles by the bowlful, ate solid food by the bowlful. Now his greedy nature was reported to the Master; the Master did not allow him a bag for his bowl.⁵²

⁴⁹ ThagA, p. 4.

⁵⁰ AA, p. 198. The text adds that for this reason he was called Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja. See the same story in ApA, p. 300.

⁵¹ A variant reading is "very old."

⁵² A *patta-tthavika*—a strap or sling in which to carry the bowl but also to protect it from wear.

Every day when he finished eating, he [Piṇḍola] turned his bowl over and put it under his bed. Each time he put it there it would get scraped, and each time he took it out it would get scraped. So as time went by, as a result of this constant scraping, the bowl was worn down until it came to be a container the size of only one *nāli* measure of rice. Then this was reported to the Master; this time, the Master allowed him a bag for his bowl.

Piṇḍola, having thus been forced into moderation, cultivated meditation and was soon established in the highest fruit of arhatship.⁵³

It is clear in all of these Pāli stories⁵⁴ that Piṇḍola had a bad reputation for gluttony; and yet it is equally certain that he conquered it. Although the accounts, aimed as they are at a popular audience, play a bit with the theme of monkish gluttony, their overall thrust is to clear Piṇḍola (and Buddhist monks in general) of that reputation. In this regard, it is noteworthy that in the Pāli *canonical* sources, Piṇḍola is consistently presented, not as a glutton, but as a paragon of the disciplined monk, especially of one with certain ascetic tendencies. In the *Udāna*, for instance, the Buddha himself points to Piṇḍola who is sitting "cross legged . . . holding his body upright, a forest dweller . . . needing little, contented, a recluse, shunning society, upholding the scrupulous life," and enjoins other monks to follow his example: "Revile not, harm not, live by rule restrained; of food take little; sleep and sit alone; keep thy mind bent upon the higher thought."⁵⁵

⁵³ SA, p. 393. See also UdA, p. 252.

⁵⁴ It should be pointed out here that the Sanskrit tradition does not know these stories. The closest thing we find to it is Piṇḍola's autobiographical account at the Congress on Lake Anavatapta of his evil deeds in a past life. These focus on food and his relationship with his mother, but emphasize his maliciousness rather than his greed: "I was the son of a merchant, and lord in my paternal home. Because I was supporting my father, I conducted myself with false arrogance. I satiated with food and drink my father, my sister and brother, as well as the servants doing their jobs; but my mother, I did reprimand. Overcome by malicious envy, I did not give her anything to eat and spoke harshly these cruel words: 'Eat rocks for food!'" Piṇḍola then goes on to tell how, as a result of this deed, he was cast many times into hell; then, being reborn in the human state, he could only eat pebbles and died repeatedly from hunger and thirst. Finally, in this his present birth, he encountered the Buddha, was converted and attained arhatship. See Bechert, *Anavataptagāthā*, pp. 130-33 (cf. Hofinger, *Congres du Lac Anavatata*, pp. 212-15).

⁵⁵ *Verses of Uplift*, p. 51. For the text, see Ud, p. 43.

The two verses attributed to Piṇḍola in the *Questions of King Milinda* and in the *Theragāthā* itself merely reinforce this image of him.⁵⁶

The strange discrepancy between this canonical image of Piṇḍola as a disciplined enlightened monk and the generally gluttonous image of him presented in the Pāli commentaries has been noted by a number of scholars. Heinz Bechert, after citing some of the sources on Piṇḍola's bad reputation, point out: "Jedenfalls findet man die Geschichte von Piṇḍolabhāradvājas grosser Essgier in der Pāliüberlieferung erst in nachkanonischen Texten,"⁵⁷ but he offers no real explanation for this. Jean Przyluski, however, does. According to him, Piṇḍola, the elder of Kosambī, *was* actually a glutton, but the Kauśāmbīans, wishing to enhance the image of their community and its saint, reworked the canonical passages and changed the ancient traditions in order to give their favorite son a more positive profile.⁵⁸ Such speculations, however, simply cannot be proven, especially when they involve arguing for the precedence of the commentaries over particular passages in the canonical texts. They explain away rather than seek to understand.

A much readier interpretation of this discrepancy, it seems to me, emerges from a number of stories which go farther than the ones we have examined so far, and seek to show that Piṇḍola's gluttony exists only in the minds of stingy laymen who do not know his true intentions. His desire for alms should be interpreted then as a reflection of his ardent compassion for others: he wants to have them make merit by giving him offerings. Two texts especially are significant in this regard. The first is the sequel to the story in the *Theragāthā Commentary* referred to above:

One day, after he had attained arhatship, Piṇḍola *out of compassion for a greedy brahmin of wrong views* who had been a friend of his when he was a layman and had now come to see him, preached a sermon on *dāna*. The brahmin frowned [thinking] "this man wants to destroy my wealth," and he said: "Let me give just one meal to you." Give that to the Sangha, not to me," [answered] Piṇḍola thus diverting [the offering] for the use of the community. Again the brahmin thought: "This man wants to make me give a lot!"

⁵⁶ Mln, pp. 393, 404 (cf. *Questions of Milinda*, 2: 335, 346); ThagA, 2: 5 (cf. *Elders' Verses*, p. 17).

⁵⁷ Bechert, *Anavataptagāthā*, p. 131.

⁵⁸ Przyluski, *Légende*, p. 80.

The story continues in this vein until Piṇḍola realizes that “this brahmin thinks I incited him to *dāna* out of greed for food,” and immediately sets about correcting that wrong notion by preaching to him the Buddha’s explanation of “the great fruit that comes from donation to the Sangha.”⁵⁹

The second story, which is contained in the *Mahīśāsaka Vinaya*, properly belongs to the cycle of texts dealing with Piṇḍola’s use of supernatural powers but is nevertheless relevant here: Intending to convert a stingy housewife of Rājagṛha, Piṇḍola deliberately goes to her house to beg for food and arrives there just as she is making some cakes. She pretends not to notice him, but he refuses to go away. When she tells him she will not give him anything, Piṇḍola, using his magical powers, causes some smoke to issue forth from his body. The housewife replies “even with smoke coming out of your whole body, I won’t give you anything.” Piṇḍola then causes flames to leap up from his body, but the housewife stands firm: “Even with your whole body on fire, I won’t give you anything.” Piṇḍola then flies up into the air; she is not impressed. He turns upside down and stays head downwards in mid-air, but still she will not relinquish her cakes. Finally, Piṇḍola resorts to grabbing a huge boulder and holding it in mid-air over her house. This time, threatened and frightened she agrees to give him a cake. But with the boulder back in place, she decides to make it a small one. There follows a fine example of the kind of slapstick such stories delight in: every time the woman wants to offer Piṇḍola a little cake, he, by means of his magical powers, makes it bigger. When she finally consents to cook just one of these enlarged cakes for him, he causes several of them to fly into the pan. At long last, she gives in: “If you want cakes so much, I will give you all of them; I will give you the frying pan as well.”⁶⁰

Piṇḍola’s response to this is significant and clearly argues against his own gluttony: “I do not need any cakes,” he says, “nor do I need the frying pan,” and he then explains to her that all of this was simply for the sake of her conversion. He takes her to the Sangha and has her offer the cakes to the Buddha and the monks, and she, upon hearing the Dharma, becomes enlightened.⁶¹

⁵⁹ ThagA, 2 : 5.

⁶⁰ Lévi and Chavannes, pp. 241-42.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 242.

In these two stories, we have graphic illustrations of the fact that Piṇḍola, far from being gluttonous for himself, is really, in a sense, gluttonous for others. He can be so precisely because he has no attachment or desire for the food he receives, but seeks it only for the sake of letting others make merit.

At this point, it may be useful to look once again at the etymology of Piṇḍola's name. We have already seen how in the Pāli commentaries it is readily explained as meaning "he who goes (*ulati*) for food (*piṇḍa*)", and is connected with the image of the gluttonous Piṇḍola. This, however, is not the only possible interpretation, nor is it, for that matter, a genuine etymology. As T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede point out, the word *ulati* is merely an invention of the commentators to serve as a synonym for the verb *gacchati*, "to go."⁶²

Perhaps for this reason, then, Lévi and Chavannes make no mention of this Pāli explication of Piṇḍola's name and focus instead on the Sanskrit side. Pointing out that Pāṇini and Hemacandra both recognize an *-ola* suffix, they suggest that it may be a colloquial abbreviation for the word *ālaya*, meaning "abode, receptacle, storehouse."⁶³ They base this claim on a parallel Buddhist case which posits *gandhola* for *gandhālaya*, the "abode of scent," better known as the *gandhakuṭi*.⁶⁴ Piṇḍola, then, would be a *piṇḍa-ālaya*—a storehouse, a receptacle of alms-food.

It is, of course, perfectly possible to use this interpretation of the name to reinforce the theory of Piṇḍola's gluttony, and indeed Lévi and Chavannes have done so. Piṇḍola would be called a "storehouse of food" precisely because eating was his overriding concern. But the same etymology can imply something else as well.⁶⁵ It is not just

⁶² T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, *The Pali Text Society's Pali = English Dictionary* (orig. pub., 1921-25; reprint ed., London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), s.v. "ulati."

⁶³ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 231.

⁶⁴ Ibid. On the *gandhakuṭi*, see John Strong, "Gandhakuṭi: the Perfumed Chamber of the Buddha," *History of Religions* 16 (1977): 390-406.

⁶⁵ The concept of an *ālaya*—a storehouse or receptacle in which meritorious actions are placed and by which they are made ultimately effective is one which has played an important role in Buddhism. It is, perhaps, simply a different metaphor for the more agricultural idea of a "field" of merit. In the idealist context of the Vijñānavāda school, the notion of a storehouse for the "seeds of deeds" was developed in the sophisticated theory of the *ālayavijñāna*, the storehouse consciousness. In the *gandhola* (*gandhālaya*), we have an example of a

"food" that Piṇḍola stores, but food-offerings. He is, so to speak, greedy for the acts of merit of the laity. In this sense, Piṇḍola can perhaps best be conceived of as a personification of the Buddhist monk's begging bowl: he is eminently qualified to *receive* food offerings but does not enjoy them.

In this regard, it is interesting to note that iconographically in East Asia, Piṇḍola's main trait is his (sometimes very large) begging bowl. Sitting on a chair with his bowl in one hand, he is often seen surrounded by figures of laymen making offerings to him. That he is at the same time little affected, at least physically, by the food he receives is graphically expressed by the fact that he is never portrayed as a glutton, i.e., as a fat jolly monk, but rather as a thin, bony ascetic.⁶⁶ The same thing is consistently indicated by the Tibetan tradition which, far from claiming that Piṇḍola's bowl reflects his gluttony, interprets it as representing "his miraculous power of granting the wishes of those who pray to him."⁶⁷

There is no denying that a tradition about Piṇḍola's gluttony did exist, but it is important to try to interpret the story's function in the popularly oriented texts in which it figures. The story's value to the Buddhist preacher, it seems to me, lies precisely in the fact that it recognizes a problem that probably was never too far back in the minds of most laypersons, and which has been chronic throughout the history of the Buddhist community; namely, that some individuals in the Sangha could hardly be said to be paragons of monastic discipline and restraint. This can only have engendered doubts in the minds of some laypersons (and certainly in the minds of non-Buddhist householders), and a certain reticence on their part in giving food to the apparent good-for-nothings at their door.

The strength of the story of Piṇḍola's reputed gluttony is that it does not seek to deny the possibility that such doubts may exist, but, having noted them, it seeks to quell them. It recognizes, often humorously, that some monks may have, in fact, joined the Sangha because

special ritual chamber particularly connected with the figure of the Buddha and involved with flower and other offerings of scents (*gandha*). In "Piṇḍola", then, as we shall see, we have a figure who is prominently concerned with the reception of offerings made to the Sangha, especially those of food (*piṇḍa*).

⁶⁶ See, for examples, Pander, p. 86; Grünwedel, p. 7; Tucci, p. 569; Roerich, p. 98.

⁶⁷ Tucci, p. 560.

they saw that its members were readily given food offerings—a point which, at the same time, shows the Buddhist community as a whole to be more highly regarded than other “heretical” groups. But it insists that once in the Sangha these monks overcome their bad habits and are actually ideals of disciplined renunciation. The thrust of the story as a whole, then, is to enjoin the making of offerings to monks who, whatever their reputation or appearance, are actually worthy recipients of *dāna*.

Piṇḍola's lion roar

We will touch again on Piṇḍola's role in reassuring doubtful laypersons in their making of offerings, when we consider the development of his cult. For the present I want to turn to a set of different stories that comment upon and develop Piṇḍola's *Anguttara Nikāya* epithet of “foremost of lion-roarers.”⁶⁸

There are a number of interpretations of just what is meant by a “lion's roar” in the Buddhist context. Lévi and Chavannes assume it refers to an ability to triumph over heretics in debate.⁶⁹ Rhys Davids and Stede, however, state that it refers more to “a song of ecstasy, a shout of exultation,”⁷⁰ and in the case of Piṇḍola, they would appear to be closer to the truth. In most texts, as we shall see, Piṇḍola's roar is presented as a declaration of enlightenment in which he vaunts his ability to overcome the doubts of any monks who might have them. In this sense it may be seen as a counterpart, in more doctrinally oriented monastic circles, to the characteristic of overcoming the doubts of the faithful laity which we have just dealt with.

There are, in the Pāli texts, a number of stories that seek to explain how Piṇḍola came by his epithet. The *Apadāna* would have us believe that it can be traced to the story of his previous birth as a lion:

A Jīna named Padumuttara, self-born best of men,
dwelt at that time in Cittakūṭa in front of Himālayas.
I[Piṇḍola] was then a fearless quadruped, the king of beasts;
and many people, hearing my voice, became rigid with fear.
Taking a beautifully blossoming lotus, I approached the bull among men;
I payed reverence to the Buddha who was sunk in samādhi.
I bowed to the four quarters and to the best Buddha, foremost of men;
and making tranquil my own mind, I gave forth a lion's roar.⁷¹

⁶⁸ See above, n. 2.

⁶⁹ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 250.

⁷⁰ *Pali-English Dictionary*, s.v. “sīhanāda.”

⁷¹ Ap, p. 50.

The commentary on this passage provides the full setting of the story, and makes it clear that this roar was intended to protect Padumuttara while he was sitting in meditation in the lion's cave. This act, together with his offering of flowers is to result in the lion's eventual enlightenment:

After serving previous Buddhas here and there during his lifetimes, [Piṇḍola] accumulated merits for the basis of arhatship, and having taken birth in the womb of a lion at the time of the Blessed Padumuttara, he dwelt in a cave at the foot of a mountain. The Blessed One, out of compassion for him, entered his den when he had gone out hunting, and sat down there in the trance of cessation.⁷² The lion, after catching his food, returned. Standing at the cave's door, he saw the Buddha; thrilled and pleased at the sight, he payed pūja with all kinds of flowers,⁷³ calmed his mind and, so as to protect the Blessed One and chase away the other beasts of prey, roared three times a lion's roar. . . . At the end of seven days, the Blessed One awoke from the trance of cessation and declared that from this act would stem the basis of the lion's arhatship.⁷⁴

It may be possible to relate this protective role of Piṇḍola as a lion to his later position as one of the sixteen arhats protectors of the Dharma. However, the other Pāli commentaries which tell this story are not finally interested in this his animal lion's roar and concentrate instead on the human Piṇḍola's lion-roar—the "song of enlightenment" he gives in this life upon actually attaining arhatship.

The *Anguttara Nikāya Commentary*, for example, explains that the whole story of Piṇḍola's previous birth as a lion is a developed "graduated sermon" (*anupubbikathā*) that is to be narrated only in the event of a question; it is thus just an extra tale, a precursor to the more significant story of Piṇḍola's human lion roar, the gist of which is as follows:

Indeed, on the day on which he reached arhatship, he [Piṇḍola] took a key, and going from vihāra to vihāra, through all the private cells of the monks, he roamed about roaring his lion's roar: "Whoever has any doubts about the path or the fruit, let them ask me!" And when he stood in front of the Buddha, he roared again: "In this Sāsana, O Bhadanta, I have done what is to be done, I have reached the summit!" Therefore he got the name "foremost of lion roarers."⁷⁵

⁷² In the *Anguttara Nikāya Commentary* version of the story, he enters the trance and remains suspended in mid air. See AA. 1: 197.

⁷³ In the AA version (p. 197), the lion piles the flowers from the ground up to where the Buddha is suspended in mid air so as to make a seat for him to rest on.

⁷⁴ ApA, p. 300.

⁷⁵ AA, 1: 196. See also ThagA, p. 4 and ApA, p. 300.

The concreteness and exuberance which mark this account resemble perhaps nothing so much as an Indian precursor to the later shouts of enlightenment of Chinese and Japanese Zen masters. But especially noteworthy for our purposes is Piṇḍola's declaration to the whole of the Bhikkhu-sangha of his willingness to answer any of their questions on doctrinal and meditational points about the Buddhist path (*magga*) or the fruit (*phala*) of the path. He sets himself up then as one who can overcome what might be called the "dharmalogical doubts" of monks on the path, a role which as we have seen complements his function of reassuring the doubting merit-makers in their karmic acts of offering.

This dual role may well have received expression in Piṇḍola's iconography in China and Tibet. For in addition to the bowl which he holds in his left hand, the other constant characteristic feature of Piṇḍola's image is the book which he has in his right hand.⁷⁶ In addition to being a master at receiving material offerings, it would seem, he is also a learned master of Dharma who is able to cut through doctrinal doubts.

This latter capacity of his has not received the attention it deserves, even though, as we have just seen, it lies at the basis of his best known epithet. Moreover, it is featured in a number of other stories which are related to Piṇḍola's later cult but which are worth citing here.

In the Chinese biography of Tao-an (314-85), we are told that An, who frequently annotated the sūtras, was plagued by doubts that his interpretations might be wrong. He prayed for an auspicious sign to reassure him that he was on the right track.

He then dreamed he saw an Indian man of Tao who had white hair and long eyebrows and spoke to An saying "The annotations made to the sūtras by you, Sir, are quite in harmony with the principles [of the sacred texts]. As for me, I have not obtained Nirvāṇa and I live in the Western Regions. I will aid you in diffusing [the doctrine]." ⁷⁷

As we shall see in the *Aśokāvadāna*, long white hair and eyebrows are one of Piṇḍola's characteristic features. Here then we are led to believe that Piṇḍola made an appearance in China, to reassure the doubting Venerable Tao-an, even before he was officially known there. Indeed the same text immediately goes on to say: "Afterwards, when

⁷⁶ Pander, p. 86; Tucci, p. 569; Grünwedel, p. 7; Roerich, p. 98.

⁷⁷ Link, p. 35.

the *Sarvāstivāda-vinaya* arrived, the Reverend Hui-yüan then recognized that he about whom the Upādhyāya (i.e., Tao-an) had dreamed was the [Arhat] Piṇḍola.”⁷⁸

Piṇḍola is said to have made the same sort of appearance to the Venerable Asanga, master of the Vijñānavāda school. In Paramārtha's (499-569) *Life of Vasubandhu*, we are told that Asanga was first a priest of the Sarvāstivāda school. He

practiced meditation and became free from desire, [but] though he investigated the doctrine of nothingness, he could not understand it. He was about to commit suicide. Bin-du-la [Piṇḍola] an Arhat who was then in Pūrva Videha, having perceived this, came to him from that region and expounded the doctrine of nothingness peculiar to the Hinayāna.⁷⁹

The text goes on to say that this ultimately did not satisfy Asanga who finally had to go to the Tuṣita heaven and learn the *Mahāyāna* doctrine of nothingness from Maitreya himself.⁸⁰ But this does not detract from the image of Piṇḍola as one who comes to answer the needs of monks in doctrinal difficulties. We shall examine later on several examples in which Piṇḍola “appears” in a similarly mysterious fashion to those who worship him. For the present, suffice it to reiterate the two ways in which Piṇḍola functions as an allayer of the doubts of the believers: he is a fit receiver of alms, and he is a dharma-logical lion-roarer.

Piṇḍola and Supernatural Powers

There is one other feature of Piṇḍola's legend which is not unrelated to this and which must be touched upon here; it is in addition perhaps the most famous story about his career as a disciple of the Buddha. I refer to his performance of a magical feat in front of the laity. The story is well known as it is found in the vinayas of five different schools and is recounted in a number of Pāli commentaries as well. It need only be summarized here.

Jyotiṣka, a rich man of Rājagṛha, had a begging bowl made from a block of sandalwood, and, wishing to see a display of supernatural powers, he suspended it from the top of a high bamboo pole and organized a contest: whoever could bring the bowl down using magical

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Junjiro Takakusu, “The Life of Vasu-bandhu by Paramārtha (A.D. 499-569),” *T'oung-pao* 5 (1904): 273.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

powers could keep it. Different heretic masters (*tīrthikas*) all try to obtain it, each one pretending in various devious fashions to be endowed with supernatural faculties. But the rich householder is not to be fooled; he wants graphic proof of their powers. Then Piṇḍola happens by together with Mahā Maudgalyāyana. He urges the latter (who is well known as a master of supernatural faculties) to take the bowl, but Maudgalyāyana declines and suggests that Piṇḍola do it instead. Piṇḍola, therefore, flies up into the air in full view of the assembled crowds, tours the city several times, grabs the bowl and brings it to the rich man who fills it and honors him. He then goes back to the vihāra. The whole incident, however, is reported to the Buddha who questions Piṇḍola, reprimands him severely for having exhibited his supernatural powers, and then makes a Vinaya rule to the effect that the performance of magical feats in the presence of laymen will henceforth be a *duṣkṛta* offence.⁸¹

There are a number of variations on this theme of Piṇḍola's use of magical powers. One story in particular appears repeatedly. This is the account of his flying through the air on a huge boulder. In the *Dharmagupta Vinaya*, for example, this story has been combined with that of his taking the sandalwood bowl: it is from his flying boulder that Piṇḍola grabs it.⁸² Also, the *Mahīśāsaka Vinaya*, as we have already seen, develops the theme of the boulder further and has Piṇḍola convert the stingy woman of Rājagṛha (who had refused to give him her cakes) by flying with a huge rock over her house. The same text goes on to record the Buddha's reprimand of Piṇḍola for this action and his establishment of the Vinaya rule prohibiting such performances.⁸³

In all of the Vinaya texts, then, whether they feature the story of the bowl or that of the boulder, Piṇḍola's offence is basically the same—the improper display of supernatural powers in front of the laity, and it is this which is the occasion for a formal interdiction of public magical performances by bhikṣus.

The reasons the Buddha gives for reprimanding Piṇḍola are, how-

⁸¹ See the various Vinaya accounts in Lévi and Chavannes, pp. 233-47, and the expanded version of the story in Dhpa, 3: 199-203 (cf. *Buddhist Legends*, 3: 35-38).

⁸² Lévi and Chavannes, p. 237.

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 242-43.

ever, neither very clear nor convincing. In two of the vinayas, he compares Piṇḍola's act to that of a woman displaying her private parts for money: he should not have revealed what is usually hidden for the sake of a mere bowl.⁸⁴ It is, however, not at all clear that Piṇḍola did it for the sake of the bowl alone. The setting, it should be remembered, is consistently that of a tournament of magical powers with the heretics. In fact, in one text, when none of the non-Buddhists are able to fly up and take the bowl, the householder who organized the contest becomes convinced that there are no longer any Arhats in the world.⁸⁵ Piṇḍola's action, then, is intended to overcome this doubt—to show that among the Buddhists (i.e., *only* among the Buddhists) there are indeed enlightened individuals. It is, in fact, for this reason that he first urges Mahā Maudgalyāyana to perform the feat in his stead.

It is, of course, possible to argue that such proofs of arhatship distract rather than attract the faith of the masses. And the *Theravāda Vinaya* does add that such magical displays do not develop faith among unbelievers.⁸⁶ But this view flies in the face of countless Buddhist stories in which magical displays are common features and not only greatly stimulate the faith of the masses, but often occasion their arhatship as well.

One can only conclude that in the formal Vinaya ordinance against the performance of magical feats, we have an attempt to cover up the fact that we have reached the time when ordinary monks simply cannot perform these feats anymore. In this the Buddhists were cleverer, perhaps, but ultimately not very different from the heretic master who, while pretending to have magical powers, instructed his disciples to forcibly hold him down just as he was making as if to leap up into the air, and to say to him "Teacher, what are you doing? Do not reveal hidden powers of Arhatship to the multitude for the sake of a wooden bowl!"⁸⁷

That the Buddhist themselves were aware of the lameness of their

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 235, 237.

⁸⁵ Dhpa, 3: 202 (cf. *Buddhist Legends* 3: 37).

⁸⁶ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 235. See also *The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-piṭaka)*, trans. I. B. Horner (London: Luzac and Co., 1952), Sacred Books of the Buddhists, vol. 20, part 5, p. 151.

⁸⁷ Dhpa, 3: 201 (cf. *Buddhist Legends*, 3: 36).

position is reflected in a number of stories in which they try to reinforce the rationale for the interdiction of supernatural displays. In one of the Chinese translations of the *Sumāgadhāvadāna*, for example, a variation on the tale of Piṇḍola's magical feat is developed in such a way that a cogent ethical reason is presented for the interdiction: supernatural displays are shown to lead possibly to the loss of life. The story is a bit different than that contained in the vinayas: ⁸⁸

Piṇḍola is late for an assembly which is being held by Sumāgadhā, the daughter of Anāthapiṇḍada in the far away city of Puṇḍavardhana. He is sitting on a mountain top mending his robe. When he finishes, he plants the needle into the ground with the thread still attached to his hem. Then, in his haste to get to the reunion, he forgets about this and flies away, breaking off the whole mountain top and dragging it along behind him through the air, still attached to the thread and the needle. Only after 8,000 *li* does he realize what has happened, and he tosses the mountain back into its place. Unfortunately, in the meantime, a woman who happened to be in the area and happened to be pregnant saw the huge mountain-boulder flying overhead and became so frightened that she miscarried. The Buddha then forbids the performance of such acts in front of the laity, pointing out that they caused the death of a living being. ⁸⁹

Secondly, in the *Dhammapada Commentary*, where the vinaya story of Piṇḍola and the bowl is recounted in great detail, there is an interesting sequel which clearly shows that Piṇḍola's act was not wrong per se. The heretics, hearing of the Buddha's interdiction on magical acts, decide that this is the right time to challenge *him* to a tournament of supernatural displays, thinking he will not be able to exhibit any at all. King Bimbisāra hears about this, goes to the Buddha and asks him what he intends to do. "If they perform miracles," answers the Buddha, "I will do the same." "Have you not laid down a precept forbidding the performance of miracles?" asks Bimbisāra. "Great king," replies the Buddha, „I have not laid down a precept for myself; the precept was intended to apply only to my disciples." ⁹⁰ The

⁸⁸ For a study and translation of the four Chinese versions of this early avadāna text, see Tsurumatsu Tokiwai, *Studien zum Sumāgadhāvadāna* (Darmstadt: G. Ottos, 1898).

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 49.

⁹⁰ *Buddhist Legends*, 3: 39 (text: DhA, 3: 204).

Buddha's answer is so striking that Bimbisāra inquires again to make sure that that was what he meant. That it was, however, is clearly indicated by the rest of the story in which the Buddha goes on to perform the greatest and most famous magical display of his career: the twin miracle of Śrāvastī.⁹¹

There is, then, a real ambivalence in the Buddhist attitude towards the use of magical powers. On the one hand, their importance is denigrated; men on the path should not be preoccupied by such trivialities. On the other hand, the possession of such powers is seen to be a visible sign of enlightenment and a connection to the figure of the Buddha who continues to exhibit them. They are thus real tools in defeating heretics as well as in overcoming the doubts of the crowd.

The figure of Piṇḍola is closely caught up in this ambivalence. He is, in a sense, the last man of the golden age of miracles. His act marks a transition point—at least in retrospect—in the mythology of popular Buddhism in India. It is the beginning of our present profane age in which ordinary persons no longer exhibit or witness extraordinary powers, at least not blatantly. To this extent Piṇḍola takes on the role of a scapegoat; he is blamed for the present profane situation. And yet it is clear that he, like the Buddha, was an arhat; he had and has the capacity to perform such supernatural feats, even though the Vinaya does not permit him to exhibit them. In a sense, then, he, like all enlightened beings, is above the Vinaya—a fact which, it might be pointed out, also puts his apparent gluttony in a different perspective.

In the end, both the Vinaya rule and the story of Piṇḍola and the bowl, which occasioned it, operate in much the same way as the traditions about his gluttony; their intent is to combat the doubts of those who, in this profane age, would question the qualities of the bhikṣu. For the interdiction on the monks' display of supernatural powers in no way denies their ability to perform them, but in fact hints at it; and the final claim is that despite appearances, Piṇḍola (and Buddhist monks after him) are possibly already powerful enlightened individuals and hence fit foci for devotion.

⁹¹ Exactly the same sequence of events, to which is then added the Buddha's spending the rains retreat preaching to his mother in the Trāyastriṃśa heaven and his descent from that heaven, can be found in SnA, pp. 570 ff., and J, 4: 263 ff. cf. (*The Jātaka*, 4: 166 ff.).

Piṇḍola's banishment

Of course, Piṇḍola's act could not have marked this transition point of the "esoterization" of Buddhist magical powers without having, at the same time, repercussions on his own status as well.

In the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*, at the end of the account of Piṇḍola and the sandalwood bowl, we find an interesting detail added which does not appear in the other vinaya texts. The Buddha, having reprimanded Piṇḍola and set up the rule against the public performance of magical acts by bhikṣus, then punishes Piṇḍola further by forbidding him to remain in our world of Jambudvīpa.⁹² Piṇḍola, recognizing his fault and accepting his banishment, bows to the Buddha, goes back to his cell and, entering the trance of samādhi, departs from Jambudvīpa forever to take up residence in Aparā-Godanī. There, he becomes a model arhat, converting numerous persons, founding monasteries, and maintaining the Dharma.⁹³

Aparā-Godanī, it will be remembered, is precisely the place where, according to Nandimitra's sermon on the sixteen arhats, Piṇḍola is said to reside together with a thousand followers, after agreeing not to enter Parinirvāṇa and to maintain the Buddha's teaching until the final period of the Law.⁹⁴ In the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*, no mention is made of Piṇḍola's not entering Parinirvāṇa; but that this and the theme of ostracism from Jambudvīpa are closely related is indicated in a number of other sources.

For example, in Hui-chien's translation of the *Method of Inviting Piṇḍola* (c. 460) it is stated explicitly: "Because [Piṇḍola] manifested supernatural faculties in front of the lay notable Jyotiṣka, the Buddha banished him and did not authorize him to enter Nirvāṇa. He ordered him to become a field of merit for the four types of faithful in the final period of the Law."⁹⁵

In the *Aśokāvadāna*, the same thing occurs as a result of his flying through the air with the mountain top: "When," Piṇḍola tells Aśoka, "the Blessed One was invited by Sumāgadhā, the daughter of Anātha-piṇḍada to go to Puṇḍavardhana, I, at that time, using magical means,

⁹² Lévi and Chavannes, p. 245.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 246.

⁹⁴ See above, p. 4.

⁹⁵ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 216. The four types of faithful are monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen.

grabbed a mountain top and flew with it to Puṇḍavardhana. On account of that, the Blessed One ordered me not to enter Parinirvāṇa.”⁹⁶ The *Sumāgadhāvadāna* which, as we have seen, knows the same story, adds that he is condemned to remain in this world until the arrival of Maityeya, and then only will he be able to enter Parinirvāṇa.⁹⁷

In Nandimitra's *Record of the Abiding of the Dharma*, the sixteen arhats' refraining from Nirvāṇa and their remaining behind to maintain the Dharma is presented as an honor which they are accorded by the Buddha on his deathbed. Noting this, many scholars have sought to compare the “ideology of the sixteen arhats” with Mahāyāna notions of the bodhisattva ideal.⁹⁸ In the texts just cited, however, Piṇḍola's not entering Nirvāṇa is presented as a banishment, a punishment for his misdeed. Unlike the bodhisattva, it is not out of compassion for suffering sentient beings that Piṇḍola refrains from entering Parinirvāṇa; it is rather as a result of his own violation of the Vinaya. Most interestingly, he is *condemned* to become what a bodhisattva is—a maintainer of the Dharma and a field of merit for others until the end of the age.

Mahāyāna attitudes towards the notion of arhatship are, of course, well known. What we have here, however, may be the obverse—a rare expression of Hīnayāna sentiments towards the notion of the bodhisattva ideal; or perhaps more specifically—a monastic counter to the laicization implicit in the bodhisattva ideal. For unlike many bodhisattvas, Piṇḍola remains above all a monk, a member of the Saṅgha. In the Pāli tradition, there is a constant emphasis on the eminently monastic traits of his character; he is above all a Buddhist beggar, the man with the bowl, i.e., a bhikṣu. As we have noted, in some canonical texts, he is presented as the ideal of the ascetic disciplined monk; and as we shall see, in his cult, great emphasis is put on the monastic features of his character. Moreover, because he does not enter Nirvāṇa, Piṇḍola remains, in a sense, a “monk for all times”—the embodiment and guarantee of the bhikṣu ideal.

⁹⁶ *Asokāvadāna*, p. 99 (cf. Burnouf, p. 355). Exactly the same account is found in two Chinese versions of the text, the *A-yü-wang ching* and the *Tsa a-han ching*, but not in the *A-yü-wang chuan*. See Przyluski, p. 266 and Lévi and Chavannes, p. 261.

⁹⁷ Tokiwai, p. 50.

⁹⁸ See, for example, Lévi and Chavannes, p. 271.

We will have occasion to return to this important characterization; at this point, however, a different problem arises. If Piṇḍola's banishment from Jambudvīpa is taken literally, how can he be said to remain an ideal figure in this world or act, as he is supposed to, as a ready field of merit for the four kinds of faithful here below?

That this problem did actually plague certain Buddhists is evidenced in Tao-shih's article on Piṇḍola which was written in the mid 7th century. There, the story of Piṇḍola and the bowl is recounted as is his banishment from Jambudvīpa. Then, however, an interesting sequel has been added. A number of disciples express a desire to be able to see the Venerable Piṇḍola again; the Buddha therefore authorizes Piṇḍola to return "occasionally and to take his seat when invited."⁹⁹ It is apparent, then, that Piṇḍola's ostracism was not absolute. The reference to Piṇḍola's seat, as we shall see, touches upon one of the features of his cult, and it is clear that we have here an escape clause which allows for Piṇḍola's cultic presence in the world.

Nevertheless the story of Piṇḍola's banishment does serve to give him the character of an "outsider." This marks a definite change in his status; though he is still a monk, a member of the Sangha, he does not belong to any particular Sangha in this world. He is rather condemned to being an occasional visitor, a wanderer, and the exclusion from Parinirvāṇa makes him so perpetually.

The cult of Piṇḍola

This characteristic of Piṇḍola's being condemned to wander for all time, a mysterious outsider who occasionally appears here and there in this world, long ago motivated the encyclopedic Japanese scholar Minakata Kumagusu to compare Piṇḍola to the figure of the "Wandering Jew" whom Jesus condemned on the way to Calvary to remain in this world until his Second Coming, and who thereafter wandered for centuries throughout Western Europe, a living witness to the events of the Christian Holy Week.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 208.

¹⁰⁰ Minakata, p. 123. The comparison was picked up by Albert J. Edmunds, *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*, 2 vols., 4th ed., (Philadelphia: Innes & Sons, 1902), 2: 264-67. The legend of the Wandering Jew sprung up in Medieval times and reached the height of its popularity in 17th and 18th century Western Europe. For a recent study which mentions in passing the "Piṇḍola parallel," see George K. Anderson, *The Legend of the Wandering Jew* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1965).

The Chinese sources on the cult of Piṇḍola assembled by Minakata and presented in much greater detail by Lévi and Chavannes testify to his being such an undying holy man who mysteriously comes to assemblies of the faithful.

In them, however, the cult of Piṇḍola is essentially conceived of as a rite of hospitality. It consists of inviting Piṇḍola to the monastic assembly and offering him two things: food and/or a bath.¹⁰¹ Piṇḍola, it should be specified, may or may not accept this invitation; it depends on the purity of heart with which it is extended. But if he does accept, he comes either in disguise as an old man, as a wandering stranger, or in even more mysterious ways than that. His presence, therefore, though it is a sign that the rite is being carried on properly, is not always easy to detect.

Two examples, both taken from the *Method of Inviting Piṇḍola* illustrate this well.

A wealthy householder held a feast for monks on several occasions and prayed each time to Piṇḍola, inviting him with a heart full of faith. Piṇḍola, however, did not come, or at least did not appear to come. Finally the householder invited over a hundred elders and asked them to tell him what he was doing wrong. One of the elders whom he had not seen previously replied:

You invited me to your three assemblies and each time I accepted your invitation. But you had posted a servant at the door and he prevented me from entering. Since I am old and my clothes are torn, he thought I was a good-for-nothing śramaṇa who had been expelled from the community and refused to let me enter.¹⁰²

The elder goes on to describe how the servant beat him with a stick, and blames it all on the householder's niggardliness. He then suddenly disappears. The householder realizes that the elder was none other than Piṇḍola himself and the text draws the obvious lesson: laypersons should make sure they never turn away any monks—no matter how ragged or disreputable—from their maigre feasts.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Apart from the *Ch'ing Pin-t'ou-lu fa* [The method of inviting Piṇḍola], there is record of a *Ch'ing sheng-seng yü wen* [The prayer for inviting the saintly monk (i.e., Piṇḍola) to bathe]. The latter was translated by Sanghavarman in 434, but is unfortunately no longer extant. See Lévi and Chavannes, p. 215.

¹⁰² Lévi and Chavannes, p. 218.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 219.

The second example occurs elsewhere in the same text. There it is specified that whenever monks are going to take a bath, one should first invite Piṇḍola and say: "We hope you will accept our invitation to bathe in such and such a place." Then, after preparing all the requisites for the bath—pure water, perfumed infusions, unguents, willow branches, etc.—one should open the door of the bathhouse and bid Piṇḍola enter. Thereupon one closes the door. After a while, the monks can go in and bathe. ¹⁰⁴

This elaborate charade is found also in other texts where the visits of Piṇḍola are described in even more magical mysterious terms. Tao-shih (7th century) lists a number of ways in which Piṇḍola comes but remains invisible. Only his footprints appear in the dining hall, for example, in between the pillars; or perhaps it is the mark of a pilgrim's staff striking the well swept ground of the courtyard. ¹⁰⁵ In the bathroom, when one reopens the door, one can see signs that the water has been used and splashed around. ¹⁰⁶

By the time his cult was fully developed, many elaborate tests were arranged to determine whether or not Piṇḍola had actually come to an assembly. These tended to center around the "empty seat" prepared for him in the monastery's refectory. ¹⁰⁷ Tao-shih specifies that whenever Piṇḍola is invited to a meal, one should prepare for him a place of honor and on his seat put soft cushions and other delicate fabrics. Then after the meal is over his seat is checked. If there is an imprint on the cushions, as though someone had been sitting there, then one knows that Piṇḍola actually came. If there are no imprints left, then some neglect has occurred in the ceremony. ¹⁰⁸

Whether or not Piṇḍola comes to take his seat when invited is, then, a positive sign of the merit maker's own degree of ritual correctness

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 217.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 206.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 219.

¹⁰⁷ Although Lévi and Chavannes fail to emphasize this point, it is as the patron saint of the refectory that Piṇḍola became most firmly established in China as well as in Japan. See Mochizuki, p. 4334 and Ch'en, p. 101. See also n. 28 above.

¹⁰⁸ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 210. Actually the distinctions are even finer than this; according to the marks left one is supposed to know whether Piṇḍola came in his "body of bliss" (*sambhogakāya*) or his "transformation body" (*nirmāṇakāya*). This attribution of different bodies to Piṇḍola as if he were a Buddha is not found elsewhere.

and faith.¹⁰⁹ In this we clearly have a continuation of the function of Piṇḍola as an overcomer of the doubts of the faithful; he is a visible, or at least half-visible, proof of the effectiveness of the offering.

But at the same time, we also have a link-up with the theme of Piṇḍola being primarily one who comes to receive alms-food, of his being a *piṇḍa-ālaya*. For it is to his empty seat, which it should be remembered is located in the refectory, that food offerings are to be made both in the morning and at the major noonday meal. Significantly, these offerings to him are to be placed in a begging bowl.¹¹⁰

Moreover, although spoons, chopsticks, cups, and napkins may also be set out,¹¹¹ in no case are objects which are not fit for monks to be prepared for him. As Tao-shih specifies:

Although he [Piṇḍola] is an arhat, he is nevertheless on the same footing as an ordinary monk; he too is subject to the 250 rules of the *pratimokṣa*. That is why he cannot receive objects such as variegated silks, gold, silver, etc. In the case of a Buddha, a bodhisattva, or a person of the Mahāyāna, as they are not subject to the conditions that characterize a monk who has taken orders, then offerings of all kinds may be given.¹¹²

We have already referred to the eminently monastic traits of Piṇḍola's character in the Pāli texts. Clearly these were maintained as well in his cult in China.

On all counts, then, we find in the cult of Piṇḍola as it developed in China a continuation of the several themes we detected in his legend as it appears in the Pāli texts. In both places he is pictured as one involved in confirming the faith of believers by his capacity to receive food-offerings as an ideal monk.

The setting up of the empty seat for Piṇḍola in China can be traced at least as far back as the time of Tao-an (314-85). As we have seen, in the latter's biography, Piṇḍola is said to visit him in a dream and to quell his doubts about annotating the scriptures. On this occasion,

¹⁰⁹ For this reason, the seat had to remain open at all times, ready for his coming. According to one text, not even an image of Piṇḍola should be placed on it, for if Piṇḍola were to come, how would he move the image aside? (Ibid., p. 211).

¹¹⁰ The continuation of this practice in Japan is attested to in the 9th century *Taketori monogatari* in which Piṇḍola's bowl, set up in a Buddhist temple, becomes the focus of a tale of romance. See Donald Keene, tr., "The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter," *Monumenta Nipponica* 11 (1956): 334.

¹¹¹ Lévi and Chavannes, p. 211.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 210.

however, Piṇḍola also adds: "From time to time you may make me an offering of food." And thenceforth, we are told, "they established a seat to make food offerings to him and everywhere this became the rule."¹¹³ The same tradition, however, goes back further than Tao-an. In fact, it had its roots in India, for, as we shall see, in the *Aśokāva-dāna* it is already the empty seat that is left in the midst of Aśoka's great assembly that is said to belong to Piṇḍola.

Piṇḍola and Aśoka

Thus far, we have basically dealt with two kinds of traditions: those that considered Piṇḍola to be a disciple living at the time of the Buddha, and those that viewed him as an undying arhat in the post-parinirvāṇa age. In the first category would fall the stories of his reputation for gluttony, his lion's roar, his display of supernatural powers. In the second, we find the traditions of his banishment, of his not entering Parinirvāṇa (by which he is also connected to the sixteen arhats) and of his cult in Buddhist refectories. I have endeavored to point out various continuities running through these two sets of traditions, centering around the themes of food offerings and the overcoming of the doubts of those making them. But the question remains in what way precisely are these doubts overcome?

If I have saved the story of Piṇḍola's encounter with King Aśoka for last, it is because I believe that it better than any other text enables us fully to bridge together these pre- and post-parinirvāṇa pictures of Piṇḍola, as well as to understand and answer this question.

¹¹³ Link, p. 35. A bit further on in the same text (pp. 36-37) the subject of the bath comes up. On a day which corresponds to February 22, 385, "suddenly there was a strange monk whose appearance was very common and unprepossessing who came to the monastery to ask for temporary lodging. Since the monastery quarters were confined they put him in the hall of exposition. At the time the *Karmadāna* was on watch in the hall, and at night he saw this monk go out and come in through the space between the window slit. He hastily informed An. An, amazed, arose, paid salutation, and inquired the purpose of his arrival. The strange monk replied, "I have come for your sake"! "I myself," An said "regard my sins as grievous. How can I be brought over to liberation"? He replied, "But you can very well be brought over! Yet, for the nonce, bathe the Holy Monk [Piṇḍola] and your expressed desire will inevitably bear fruit"! And he showed him in detail the method of bathing. ... When afterwards An prepared the utensils of the bath he saw that there was a band of several tens of unusual little boys who came into the monastery and played about. After a little while they came to the bath. Actually this was a holy response."

In considering the story of the meeting of Piṇḍola and Aśoka, we should not fail to note, first of all, the cultic setting in which it takes place. Aśoka decides to undertake a great *pañcavārṣika*—a quinquennial entertainment of the Sangha.¹¹⁴ For that purpose he invites the community of the four quarters to come to him in Pāṭaliputra where he plans to make them offerings of food and clothes.

A great number of monks are assembled. However, it is immediately apparent that the reunion is incomplete, for at its very center, the seat of the elder has remained empty. Aśoka, in consternation, asks Yaśas, the most venerable elder present: "How is it that the elder's seat is not mounted? Is there here someone else who is older than you?" "There is, O great king," comes the answer. "This seat is that of Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja whom the self-mastered best of speakers [i.e., the Buddha] designated as foremost of lion-roarers."¹¹⁵

Immediately then, we have established here the theme—so important in the Chinese cult—of Piṇḍola's empty seat in the midst of an assembly about to receive food offerings. This is immediately followed by the theme of Piṇḍola being the one undying figure who bridges the gap between the time of the Buddha and the "present" age. Aśoka, a man of the post-parinirvāṇa period is most astonished that Piṇḍola is still alive and, perhaps betraying signs of an incipient cult in which Piṇḍola's actual arrival at an assembly was both uncertain and usually mysterious, he asks: "Is it possible for us to see him?" "Great king," answers Yaśas, "you will see him now." And there follows the account of Piṇḍola's spectacular arrival. Flying through the air like a *rājahaṃsa*, surrounded by several thousands of arhats in "half-moon formation," he alights in the midst of the assembly and takes his place on the empty seat, his white hair flowing and his white eyebrows

¹¹⁴ Precisely what the *pañcavārṣika* consisted of is a matter of some scholarly debate. E. B. Cowell and R. A. Neil (*The Divyāvadāna* [Cambridge: University Press, 1886], index, s.v.) considered it to consist of the entertainment of the monks during the five months of the rainy season (*varṣa*). This view was shared by Burnouf (p. 351, n. 2) who, however, also suggested that the term referred to a larger gathering and entertainment of the monks every five years. Lamotte (p. 66) adds that it was not necessarily held every five years, but was the occasion on which kings spent in honor of the Sangha whatever had accumulated in their treasuries during a five year period. In any case, it is clear that it was an occasion of offering on a grand scale.

¹¹⁵ *Aśokāvadāna*, p. 96 (cf. Burnouf, p. 353).

so long that they hang down and cover the pupils of his eyes.¹¹⁶ Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja has arrived to receive his food offering, and his presence is clearly a sign that Aśoka's *pañcavārṣika* is being carried out properly.

At this point there occur some intriguing exchanges between Aśoka and Piṇḍola which provide clues to the interpretation of his cult and legend as a whole.

By virtue of the fact that he *knew* the Buddha, Piṇḍola, of course, establishes a connection between the age of the Buddha and the present, profane, post-parinirvāṇa time of Aśoka. This connection, however, is more than that of a mere witness—the link of memory across time. In an actual, more experiential sense, Piṇḍola also makes the Buddha himself present in the here and now situation. This is expressed in the text in a rather intriguing way.

Although Piṇḍola is physically *there* on the seat in front of him, Aśoka does not immediately see him “face to face.” As we have mentioned, Piṇḍola's long white eyebrows hang down and cover the pupils of his eyes, and this, in quite literal terms, keeps them from “eye to eye” contact. This noteworthy physical feature of Piṇḍola, which is mentioned in only one other text,¹¹⁷ is on the one hand simply indicative of Piṇḍola's great age; he has, after all, been alive for a number of centuries. But the text is so curiously specific about his eyebrows and his eyes that some further interpretation is called for.

The matter becomes clear when it is put in the context of the Buddhist ceremony of the consecration of Buddha images. As is well known, the climax of any ritual of dedication of a painting or a statue of the Buddha is the moment of the “insertion of the eyes.”¹¹⁸ Until they are painted or put in, the image is considered to be lifeless, cultically irrelevant, just a lump of clay or stone or metal. But with

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ See n. 77 above.

¹¹⁸ Interestingly, one of the first records of this ceremony attributes its earlier performance to Aśoka. See *Samantapāsādikā: Buddhaghosa's Commentary on the Vinaya Piṭaka*, ed. J. Takakusu and M. Nagai (London: Pali Text Society, 1924), vol. 1, p. 43. The rite spread all over the Buddhist world and continues to the present day. For several examples of *kaigen* (the opening of the eyes) as it is called in Japan, see M. W. De Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1935), 1: 34, 39, 299, 324, and 2: 481, 582, 605, 642. For a modern Sinhalese example, see Richard Gombrich, “The Consecration of a Buddhist Image,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 26 (1966): 23-36.

the eyes in, it becomes alive, consecrated, a *Buddha*-image rather than an image of the Buddha, or, as an early Western observer of the ceremony put it, "a god." ¹¹⁹

With his white brows covering his pupils, Piṇḍola sits before Aśoka in much the same way as an unfinished "blind" Buddha image. It is, therefore, a moment of great importance in the text when, we are told, with king Aśoka bowing down before him, "the elder lifted up his brows with both hands and gazed straight at the king." ¹²⁰

The point is clear; in the cultic situation established by Aśoka and confirmed by his offerings and devotion, the live Piṇḍola is consecrated, i.e., is sacralized in much the same way as an image of the Buddha. And just like the Buddha image, at the precise moment of its consecration, Piṇḍola "makes present", cultically speaking, the Buddha who is absent in Nirvāṇa. Aśoka's own words to Piṇḍola confirm it: "When I destroyed the enemy host and put the whole earth . . . as far as the oceans under a single rule, then my joy was not what it is upon seeing you today. *Seeing you now, I see the Tathāgata*, and by this sight my faith has been doubled." ¹²¹

Such a dis-covery of the presence of the ultimate object of devotion in the immediate focus of devotion, whether that be an image, a stūpa, an icon, or, as in this case, a man—a monk, comes as no surprise to the historian of religions; it is, to a great extent, characteristic of all cultic situations. The text of the *Aśokāvadāna*, however, goes on to specify this experience in a very precise way.

Having opened his eyes by lifting his brows, Piṇḍola then immediately proceeds to recall for Aśoka the times when he saw the Blessed Buddha "face to face, with his own eyes just as Aśoka sees him now." ¹²² Three of these occasions actually refer to incidents we have already encountered in our own survey of Piṇḍola's legend. He says, for example, that he saw the Buddha when he flew with the mountain top to Puṇḍavardhana and the Blessed One ordered him not to enter Parinirvāṇa. He also saw him at the great "twin miracle" in Śrāvastī which, it will be recalled, was occasioned by the interdiction on magical

¹¹⁹ Robert Knox, *An Historical Relation of Ceylon* (orig. pub. 1681; reprinted as *Ceylon Historical Journal*, vol. 6, 1958), p. 130. See also Gombrich, p. 24.

¹²⁰ *Aśokāvadāna*, p. 97 (cf. Burnouf, p. 354).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 98 (cf. Burnouf, p. 354).

displays by bhikṣus. Finally, he saw him at his descent from the Trāyastriṃśa heaven (which follows in the same sequence after the Śrāvastī miracle).¹²³

One other occasion he mentions we have not encountered before in Piṇḍola's legend; he claims to have spent a rains retreat in Rājagṛha together with the Buddha and five hundred arhats. But it is the fifth occasion on which Piṇḍola saw the Buddha which is of the most interest to us. For it makes the Buddha present for Aśoka in a very special way by revealing to him his own previous life in which he in fact was with the Buddha:

"Finally, O great king," says Piṇḍola, "when of yore the Blessed One had entered Rājagṛha for alms and you as a child threw a handful of dust into his bowl, thinking 'I will give him some grits,' I, at that time, was right there. And the Blessed One predicted: 'This boy, one hundred years after my Parinirvāṇa, will be a king named Aśoka in the city of Pāṭaliputra, a *cakravartin* of one of the four regions, a dharmic *dharmarāja* who will effect the distribution of my reliquaries and the erection of the 84,000 *dharmarājikās*.'"¹²⁴

The significance of the whole cult and legend of Piṇḍola is perhaps most clearly revealed in this passage. It is not just "the Buddha" or the time and place of the Buddha in general that Piṇḍola makes present in the cultic situation; it is rather a *particular* time and place of the Buddha that is specifically geared to be relevant to the life of the individual merit-maker.

The "gift of dust" which Aśoka made as a child in a past life to the Buddha was both his simplest and his most important act of merit. If, on the one hand, because of its simplicity, it becomes a basic fundamental act of merit which any layman, no matter how poor, can perform, on the other hand, it remains very specific to Aśoka. In a sense, it defines his whole being because it marks the time when he was with the Buddha and when he planted the seeds which were to lead to his kingship and eventually to his enlightenment. It is this very specificity that guarantees the particular individual's religious experience, or perhaps re-experience, of the Buddha which quells his doubts and reestablishes his faith. Piṇḍola, by his presence, makes the departed Buddha relevant to the specific individual who makes offerings in the post-parinirvāṇa age.

¹²³ Ibid. See above, n. 91.

¹²⁴ Ibid. The reference is to Aśoka's most famous act in a previous life: his "gift of dust" to the Buddha.

Conclusion

It has been my purpose to present, in as cogent a manner as possible, the different elements of the legend and cult of Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja. In so doing, I have covered numerous stories and traditions and sought to show certain themes running through them, but some attempt must now be made to depict the overall framework into which they fit.

It is often assumed that the Sangha, because it has long been well established in Buddhist nations as a primary focus for acts of merit, did not have any difficulties in becoming and remaining so, i.e., that it naturally inherited and kept the charisma of its founder and continued to inspire such respect and devotion that Buddhists had few qualms about continuing to support it.

This image of the Sangha, however, did not come about automatically. It had to be established in the minds and hearts of its lay supporters, whose doubts often vied with their faith, and once established, it had to be maintained.

In the legend of Piṇḍola, we have a fine example of a popularly oriented justification of the Buddhist Sangha as a fit focus for devotion. This is essentially a Hīnayānist enterprise which, however, adopts some Mahāyānist ideologies (although such distinctions are not very valuable at the popular Buddhist level). Piṇḍola is almost a bodhisattva, but he remains an arhat; what is perhaps more important, however, is that he becomes, in a sense, an ideal representative of the average bhikṣu. His legend thus speaks for "every monk." In this it is successful precisely because it is not dogmatic, but first recognizes some doubts that may arise about the average member of the Sangha, and then proceeds to quell those doubts.

If, with bowl in hand, demanding alms, a member of the Sangha appears to be gluttonous, the story of Piṇḍola asserts that he is not really so but is actually a model of discipline, a *piṇḍa-ālaya*, a worthy storehouse for alms. If a venerable elder is reputed to be enlightened but does not ever demonstrate any of his powers that would show him to be so, the legend of Piṇḍola tells the merit maker what is the reason for this. If a decrepit bhikṣu who does not even belong to the local monastery just happens to come when a special feast is being given, the story of Piṇḍola justifies including even him in the assembly; in spite of appearances he is also a companion of the Buddha.

In all these ways, then, Piṇḍola acts as one who overcomes the doubts

of the faithful about the ordinary (and even the less than ordinary) members of the Sangha. And the cult of Piṇḍola as it existed in India and China reinforces this view. In it Piṇḍola is the one who guarantees that the average bhikṣu is actually an extraordinary figure who can make present the time and place of the Buddha himself in a way that is relevant to the individual merit maker. But, of course, the merit maker can only realize this by making food offerings to him in utmost sincerity.

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THE BOOKS OF ENOCH AND THE TRADITIONS
OF ENOCH

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I

The figure of Enoch and the books associated with him are among the most fascinating products of Judaism during the period of the Second Temple. Revealer of heavenly secrets, regulator of the calendar, inventor of books and learning, Enoch is a multi-faceted and rich figure. The study of the literature of Enoch has been greatly enhanced in recent years by the publications of J. T. Milik. To him were entrusted the fragmentary manuscripts of the books of Enoch discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and he has published the results of his studies of them in two important articles and most recently in *The Books of Enoch* (Oxford 1976).¹

The first publication of the Ethiopic version of the Book of Enoch by the Englishman Richard Laurence in 1821, was followed by a series of discoveries of fragments of the text in various Greek versions and in Syriac.² Up to the discovery of Cave 4 at Qumrân, no fragments of the original were known. The publication of the Ethiopic version of this work in the last century was a major factor in arousing interest in the Jewish background against which Christianity arose. In its length, diversity and richness it is unparalleled among the Jewish apocalypses and it forms a cyclopaedia of Jewish religious thought and speculation in a very crucial period. The timeliness of Milik's publication is enhanced by the concern with the Jewish apocalypses which has come to the fore again in recent years.³

¹ J. T. Milik, "Problèmes de littérature hénochique à la lumière des fragments araméens de Qumrân," *HTR* 64 (1971) 333-378; "Turfan et Qumrân. Livre des Géants juif et manichéen," in G. Jeremias, H.-W. Kuhn and H. Stegemann, eds. *Tradition und Glaube: das frühe Christentum in seiner Umwelt* (K. G. Kuhn Festschrift; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971) 117-127.

² R. Laurence, *The Book of Enoch the Prophet* (Oxford: 1821) and *Libri Enoch Prophetæ Versio Aethiopica* (Oxford: 1838); bibliography to the versions is to be found in the relevant chapters of Milik's book.

³ For an analysis of the study of apocalyptic in recent years see: K. Koch,

G. Scholem indicated some years ago that certain passages of Enoch, particularly chap. 14, stand in the tradition of which the Merkabah literature is a later form.⁴ Others have pointed to the connections between Enoch as depicted by the book and Mesopotamian lore and traditions.⁵ Yet others have observed the particular character of the astronomical and meteorological knowledge which the book contains.⁶ The story of the fallen angels, which recurs in three different forms in the Book of Enoch (Chaps. 6-19; 67:6, 69; 86-88), is central in the development of certain views on the origins of evil and forbidden knowledge, as well as demonology (cf. *Jubilees* 10:1-14). These are just a few of the most interesting features of the Book of Enoch. For reason of its varied and significant contents, the publication of substantial fragments of the Semitic original from very ancient manuscripts is a notable event.

Milik's edition of the fragments has been prepared with learning and care. The fragmentary Qumrân manuscripts have been compared with the Greek fragments and with the complete Ethiopic version. Moreover, Milik has attempted restoration of numerous lacunae on the basis of his studies of the Greek and Ethiopic versions and has provided the whole with indexes in various languages, as well as plates and a diplomatic transcription. Milik's great experience in working with Qumrân manuscripts has aided him in piecing together the fragments of diverse leather scrolls; his scholarship and patience stood by him in identifying the various hands and manuscripts. The scholarly world is indebted to him for this. Yet unless the reader has recourse to the diplomatic transcription, or better to the plates themselves, he will not always be sure as to where restoration begins and the actual text ends; indeed he cannot always be sure as to how much there actually is in the text since Milik's readings are not always con-

The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic (Naperville: Allenson, 1972); for a history of past scholarship see J. M. Schmidt, *Die Jüdische Apokalypik* (Neukirchen-Vluyn; Neukirch. Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1969).

⁴ G. G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (N.Y.: Schocken, 1941) 43-46.

⁵ H. L. Jansen, *Das Henoch Gestalt*, Skrifter utgitt av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo, II Hist.-Filos. Klasse 1939, no. 1; Oslo: Dybwad, 1939; P. Grelot, "La légende d'Hénoch dans les apocryphes et dans la bible: origine et signification," *RSR* 46 (1958) 5-26, 181-210.

⁶ See M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (London: SCM, 1474) 1-209 and references there. The most important recent study is by O. Neugebauer, "Notes on Ethiopic Astronomy", *Orientalia* NS 33 (1964) 49-71, especially 58-61.

firmed by the photographs, and by direct examination of the fragments. The Aramaic text of the proposed restorations reads strangely at times, a sort of composite Aramaic that is not true of a particular time or place but is rather the result of dictionary searching. Milik's translation of both the preserved text and his own restorations are also open to challenge.

He has prefaced a number of introductory chapters to this edition of the actual manuscripts. In these he has boldly attempted to reconstruct the literary and religious history of the Book of Enoch. Naturally, these chapters contain much that is of great interest and importance. Here is one example of the weighty issues discussed in them. The *Similitudes of Enoch* is the second of the five writings which constitute the Book of Enoch in its only full version, the Ethiopic (chaps. 37-71). This section deals, among other matters, with the eschatological saviour figure entitled Son of Man, who is created before creation and who will appear at the end of days as judge, enthroned on a throne of glory.⁷ This section, which has much interested New Testament scholars in the past, is not found among the Qumrân manuscripts. From this, Milik deduced that *The Similitudes* was not part of the ancient Enochic corpus. This writing, he maintains, is a Jewish-Christian composition of the post-Christian era (pp. 88-98). Not all scholars would agree with him about this,⁸ but in either case, the implications are considerable. If *The Similitudes* is Jewish, then it provides a plausible Jewish background against which to read the Son of Man references in the New Testament, which have so intrigued students of Christian origins. If it is not Jewish, then not only must the New Testament references be seen as standing outside a known context in Judaism, but also a form of Christianity would be thus uncovered which could create writings such as *The Similitudes*

⁷ The best study of this figure remains that of A. Sjöberg, *Der Menschensohn im äthiopischen Henochbuch* (Lund: Gleerup, 1946) (not mentioned by Milik).

⁸ The writers have set forth elsewhere the reasons for their view that the *Similitudes of Enoch* was written by a Jew in the period before the destruction of the Second Temple. See: J. C. Greenfield and M. E. Stone, "The Enochic Pentateuch and the Date of the Similitudes," *HTR* 70 (1977) 51-65.

(in which the Son of Man is identified as Enoch, cf. chap. 71).⁹

This one example may serve to indicate the ramifications which Milik's views are likely to have in a number of areas. In the following pages, some but by no means all of the views he presents in the introductory chapters will be examined and some of the possible implications of the new manuscripts for the history of Judaism will be suggested.

II

The Antiquity of the Astronomical Book

On pp. 8-10 Milik urges a number of considerations in favour of the antiquity of the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* (chaps. 72-82). The first is the antiquity of the four manuscripts of it found at Qumrân. It is indeed impressive that the oldest of these manuscripts, 4Q En astrâ, is among the oldest of all the manuscripts found at Qumrân, dating from the late third or early second century B.C.E. Incidentally the latest copy is of the Herodian age, indicating that the work was in active use and was copied during two centuries at least.

The oldest of these manuscripts, then, was written before the Maccabean revolt. This means that the calendar promoted by this writing must also be dated back into the third century; therefore the Qumrân sectaries were fostering no innovation by espousing the 364 day solar year. Moreover, this early date establishes the antiquity of the development of the Enoch figure which is depicted in the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries*. This too is of third century vintage at least.

Even though these implications are on their own rather important, Milik would carry things even further. The *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* is, he claims, the oldest part of the Book of Enoch. He sees Gen 5:23 (Enoch's 365 years of age) as implying "in guarded terms, the existence of astronomical works circulating under the name of Enoch" (p. 8). The priestly author of the Pentateuch (whom he dates confidently to the Persian period)¹⁰ structured "the chronology

⁹ See, as an example of recent treatments of the Son of Man in the New Testament: H. E. Tödt, *Der Menschensohn in der Synoptischen Überlieferung* (2ed, Gutersloh: Mohn, 1963).

¹⁰ In doing this he rides rough-shod over a great deal of recent scholarship and disregards the telling arguments of A. Hurvitz, "The Evidence of Language in Dating the Priestly Code," *RB* 81 (1974) 24-56. Hurvitz' arguments, based on linguistic criteria, for an earlier dating of P, cannot be ignored.

of the Bible and particularly of the Pentateuch, on the 364 day reckoning.”¹¹ The fact that Gen 5:23 attributes not 364, but 365 years to Enoch is no deterrent to this view. Instead, this is pronounced to be a later “correction” of an original 364 years made “precisely through the anxiety to find a more concrete reference to the year of 365 days, employed widely in Persian and Hellenistic times” (p. 8).

Nothing in all this, we suggest, comes close to showing that the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* existed in, say the fifth century (it is difficult, with all the will in the world, to put Gen 5 much later than that). Nothing in Gen 5:23 implies, alludes or suggests that its author knew “astronomical works circulating under the name of Enoch”. The number 365 might imply an astronomical connection or astronomical traditions, but not any astronomical writings. No evidence at all indicates the correction of a putative original 364 year life-span to 365 years. Let us grant, only for the sake of argument, (a) that Gen 5:23 was composed in the Persian period; and (b) that in some mysterious fashion it implies the existence of astronomical Enoch books. What is it then that shows that the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* was one of those books? The 364 day calendar, we are told, is reflected in Enoch’s age; but Enoch, according to Gen 5:23 lived for 365 years, so how does this show the connection? Milik would reply that this is an emendation from a later period, concerned with greater astronomical accuracy. Yet this concern, conveniently strong enough to account for the “emendation” of the number in Gen 5:23, was not strong enough some time later to prevent the Essenes from actually instituting the 364 day calendar as the basis of their communal and liturgical life (so Milik, p. 8).

From all of this it emerges that (a) Gen 5:23 may show calendary or astronomical connections of Enoch; (b) certain parts of biblical chronology may be based on a 364 day year; (c) the Enochic *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* existed by the third century B.C.E. at the latest. No very much earlier date can be demonstrated for it. Of these, the finding about the date of the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* is new and it is very important.

¹¹ This view is not new, of course, its first proponent having been Jaubert, “Le Calendrier des Jubilés et de la secte de Qumrân; ses origines bibliques,” *VT* 3 (1953) 250-264. See also further references in Milik, p. 8, n. 1.

The second argument adduced by Milik is the supposed citation of the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* by the Samaritan Hellenistic fragment falsely attributed by Eusebius (? following Alexander Polyhistor) to the Jewish Hellenistic historian Eupolemus (praep. ev. 9.17.2-9). This writing refers, as Milik rightly notes, to the traditions of astronomical knowledge associated with Enoch, to whom (if we emend the text) all knowledge was revealed by the angels of God. So far so good. Note that it is unclear whether a Samaritan source was used by Eupolemus or whether the mistaken attribution was the fault of Alexander Polyhistor or of Eusebius of Caesarea.¹² Milik assumes the first. Next, he says that "the Samaritan history may well date from fairly well back in the third century, since one of its objectives was the exaltation of the temple of Gerizim, founded in the time of Alexander" (p. 9). This is so unpersuasive that it requires no detailed refutation. Is every Samaritan work revering Gerizim to be dated in the first part of the third century? After that, did the Samaritans cease to revere Gerizim? By analogy do all Jewish works revering the Jerusalem temple date to the age of Solomon, or that of the Restoration, or of Herod?

Surely pseudo-Eupolemus cannot be held to provide "an obvious allusion" to the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries*, or "the first reference" to it. Enoch, we are told by pseudo-Eupolemus, invented astrology. He is the same as Greek Atlas and he transmitted his teaching to Methusaleh. This might be a reference to the astronomical teachings of the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries*, but it might equally be a reference to some other tradition associating astronomical teaching with Enoch. There is no clear indication either way in the text of pseudo-Eupolemus. In any case, even if this were a reference to the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries*, it provides no indication of dating. If the real Eupolemus was the writer of the time of the Maccabean revolt (by no means certain)¹³ and even if it was this Eupolemus who used the Samaritan source (and not Alexander Polyhistor or

¹² On the history of this matter see B. Z. Wacholder, *Eupolemus. A Study of Judaeo-Greek Literature* (Monographs of HUC 3; Cincinnati: HUC-JIR, 1974) 21-22 and sources cited there. It does not seem previously to have been the common view that it was Eupolemus who used the Samaritan source, but that the mistake was a later one.

¹³ This identification is supported at length by Wacholder, *ibid.*, 1-21.

Eusebius of Caesarea making a mistake) this would only tell us that in the third century astronomical traditions related to Enoch were known to a Samaritan writer (in Egypt ? or is the work a Palestinian composition ? or from elsewhere?), as well as to the author of the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries*, just as, soon afterwards, they may be referred to by Ben Sira (Sir 44:16). No proof of greater antiquity for the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* emerges from all this than was already indicated by the palaeographic analysis of the manuscripts. As said above, this is itself a major discovery.¹⁴

III

The Books of Enoch and the Samaritan Book of Asatir

Many years ago Milik published some general observations on the calendary texts from Qumrân.¹⁵ In his new book, in connection particularly with those parts of the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* which are either omitted completely by the Ethiopic version or radically abbreviated by it, he has provided a good many more (pp. 61-69). The importance of the calendar for the Qumrân sectaries has been pointed out often in the past and a fine example of the central importance of correct calendary reckoning as a key to righteousness is provided by *Jubilees* 6:30-38.¹⁶ Equally true is the fact that the calendar formed a major part of the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* which is probably a century or so older than the founding of the community.

Milik, building on the arguments which were discussed in the previous section, suggested that the 364 day calendar was of Samaritan origin. Samaritan priests, he says, were as likely as Judaeans to have elaborated this reckoning. This view he supports primarily by reference to his conjecture that pseudo-Eupolemus, who supposedly knew the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries*, was a Samaritan. The same calendar was known to the Priestly author of the Penta-

¹⁴ It follows that, in our view, that it would have been better if Milik had stuck to his learned considerations of the questions of the implications of the dates of his manuscripts rather than go off into hypothetical reconstructions of literary history.

¹⁵ J. T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Judaeian Desert* (London: SCM, 1959) 107-113.

¹⁶ S. Talmon, "The Calendar Reckoning of the Sect from the Judaeian Desert," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 4 (1958) 162-199.

teuch, for on p. 8 Milik says "It is highly likely indeed, that the whole chronology of the Bible, in particular of the Mosaic Pentateuch was elaborated by priestly redactors of the Persian period" (p. 8). On pp. 9-10 he states that "The invention of the calendar of 364 days, its application to Biblical chronology, and the composition of the astronomical work attributed to Enoch could have been effected just as easily by the Samaritan priests of Sichem as by Judaeans priests of Jerusalem". Does it then follow that P was not only post-exilic, but a Samaritan? This would indeed be an astounding advance of scholarship. Does it mean that *Samaritan* priests elaborated "the whole chronology of the Bible" most of whose books they do not possess in their tradition? This seems to be the clear inference from these statements.

In the present section, certain alleged references to Books of Enoch in the Samaritan chronicle named the *Book of Asaṭir* will be examined.¹⁷ The first of the passages quoted by Milik (ii:6-7) clearly refers to a *Book of Signs* associated with Enoch. The corrupt text only permits us to elicit that Enoch learned something in this Book of Signs. Nothing shows (*pace* Milik) that this is the title of a text like 4Q 260B, a seven-year calendar in the published fragment of which the word "sign" is frequent.¹⁸ The nature of the work *consulted* (not authored) by Enoch remains mysterious (pp. 62-63).

In the next section of the *Book of Asaṭir* discussed, three books are enumerated, which Noah learned, viz. *The Book of Signs*, *The Book*

¹⁷ The *Book of Asaṭir* was first published by M. Gaster, *The Asaṭir: The Samaritan Book of the "Secrets of Moses"* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1927). The text was also published by Z. Ben-Hayyim, "The Book of Asaṭir with translation and commentary," *Tarbiṣ* 14 (1943) 104-125, 174-190; *idem* 15 (1944) 71-87, 128 (Hebrew). Milik quotes it from a manuscript of the thirteenth century in his own possession. For a most recent survey of the Samaritan Chronicles, see A. Loewenstamm, "Samaritans", *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Keter: Jerusalem, 1971) 14: 750.

¹⁸ The uncorrected text is *dytbnh 'dm*; interpreted by Milik as *ytpnh*. He translates the whole as "in order that (the sons of) Adam might be converted." A correction by the original scribe produced *dyhbnh l'dm*. This Milik translates as "in order to give it to men". A subsequent corrector produced *dyhb 'dm* "which Adam gave to him". So also Gaster's text and the Arabic translation of *Asaṭir* (Ben Hayyim). This is in fact the only readily comprehensible reading of the three in Milik's manuscript. Is it possible that the l of the p.m. correction is incomplete for *lh* "to him"? Ben Hayyim's text reads *dyhb l'dm*, "which was given to Adam."

of *Astronomy* (with an Arabic word in its title; Ben Ḥayyim renders it “constellations”) and *The Book of the Wars* (iii:9; quoted by Milik, p. 66). Previously the *Book of Wars* had been mentioned as a somewhat bizzare place name (i:21-23), a country in which Adam had lived and in which he received a vision of seven planets. Milik then cites certain other passages from *The Book of Asaṭir*. Adam taught Aḥidan, son of Tubal Cain, in the *Book of Signs* (place name or book?) as is related at ii:35-36.

So far the evidence and its meaning is relatively clear, though Milik’s manuscript is not always as lucid as could be desired.¹⁹ Milik identified the three books which Noah learned as (a) sacred calendars = *Book of Signs* (b) the *Book of the Heavenly Luminaries* = *Book of Astronomy*; and (c) the *Visions of Enoch* (Enoch 6-19) = *Book of Wars*. He pronounces that “it is to Enoch, rather than to Adam—according to the information provided by the Kitâb al-’Asaṭir—that we should ascribe the authorship of the three antediluvian works transmitted to posterity by Noah.” (p. 67). This seems to be unfounded, judging by the material he adduces or other sources in the published edition of the book. Indeed, two of the books are specifically associated with Adam. Enoch, it is true, learned the *Book of Signs*, but before his time the son of Tubal Cain had learned it and later it was learned by an Egyptian sorcerer at the place with the intriguing name *ḥnwkyh* (vii:4) and also by Pharaoh at the time of Joseph (viii:16).

The evidence of the *Book of Asaṭir*, we submit, gives no evidence of a particular relationship between Enoch and the three antediluvian books, much less ascribes their authorship to him. Moreover, Milik does not even try to explain how a late Samaritan chronicle (perhaps of the eleventh century or somewhat later) knew of the constituent parts of the *Book of Enoch* in a stage prior to their redaction into the

¹⁹ Note the end of iii:8 *zh spr twldt 'dm*, rendered by Milik as an attributive of the preceding *spr mlḥmw* “Book of Wars”. In fact, of course, it is a Hebrew phrase from Gen 5:1. Its syntactic relationship to the preceding is unclear. Ben-Ḥayyim renders the phrase as a conclusion to the section here under discussion. In general, see the comments of Ben Ḥayyim, *Tarbiṣ*, 1943, 109-118, on the linguistic character of the *Book of Asaṭir*, on the confusion between Hebrew and Aramaic in it, and particularly on the Arabising character of its Aramaic. The term “Book of Wars” is itself drawn from Num. 21:14. Noah distributed the three books to his offspring (iv:15) with the *Book of Signs* going to Arpachshad.

form that they had already assumed in the late third or early second century B.C.E. It is of interest that the Samaritan mediaeval tradition knew stories of antediluvian writings which it attributed to Adam and claimed that they had been transmitted through Enoch and Noah. Enoch is said to have wished to teach the *Book of Signs* to all men, perhaps reflecting the old tradition of Enoch as wise man. Jewish traditions, too, ascribed writings to Adam and claimed that they were transmitted through Enoch and Noah.²⁰ This is still a long way from providing any evidence that the Samaritans knew the Book of Enoch as a whole or in its parts, in their present form or in that preceding it. So, interesting as the evidence from the *Book of Asaṭir* is, no support is found in it for the Samaritan authorship or even Samaritan knowledge of any part of the Book of Enoch. Unless Milik has some further, still unpublished evidence to support this view, it should be abandoned.²¹

VI

The Date of the Hebrew Book of Enoch

Milik (pp. 25-35) discusses the date of the so-called Hebrew Book of Enoch (3 Enoch).²² Accepting Odeberg's conclusion that this work is dependent on the Slavonic Book of Enoch (2 Enoch), he places 3 Enoch later than the ninth-tenth century date he assumes for 2 Enoch. However, the learned, detailed and often instructive discourse on the Slavonic Enoch presented by Milik (pp. 107-16) is not convincing. The writers will have to leave to others better suited to the task the discussion of 'a lexical argument (which) irrefutably confirms ... the dating ... to the ninth to tenth centuries' (p. 110).

²⁰ The *Sefer HaRazim* of the third or fourth century C.E. is a good example, see ed. M. Margalioth (Jerusalem: Amer. Acad. Jew. Res., 1966) p. 65 and variant readings on p. 113.

²¹ We venture to suggest that *The Book of Signs* was not a calendary writing, but may have had some divinatory use. The 24 stones must be related to Exod. 28:9-11, 39:6. So at the start of chapter iv, Noah sees all the secrets of Adam and matters relating to his Ark in the *Book of Signs*. More remains to be done on the *Book of Asaṭir's* references to antediluvian compositions. On a further point, there is no evidence that the calendary texts from Qumrân were attributed to Enoch, in spite of *Jubilees* 4:18.

²² Edition by H. Odeberg, *3 Enoch or the Hebrew Book of Enoch* (Cambridge: 1928); recently reprinted by Ktav: N.Y., 1973 with "Prolegomenon" by J. C. Greenfield.

Dr. Francis Andersen, who is currently engaged in preparation of a new edition of 2 Enoch, informs us that the results of a renewed search and examination of the Slavonic will cause a re-evaluation of the late dating of the texts of 2 Enoch. Andersen has also dealt in detail with Milik's contextual arguments. Suffice it to say that other scholars have in recent years offered good grounds for an early date for the short version of the Slavonic Enoch, and there is no need to repeat them here.²³ No student of Hekhalot literature today takes seriously Odeberg's claim that the text of the Slavonic Enoch was known to the authors of the Hebrew Enoch. It is quite clear, especially after the work of Scholem and others, that it is a matter of certain traditions concerning Enoch that are reflected in various pseudepigrapha, rather than specific literary works, influencing later books that use Enoch motifs or aspects of Enoch. There are also real differences between the Enoch of the pseudepigrapha (including Slavonic Enoch 22) and 3 Enoch.²⁴ If the development and transference of certain traditions is under discussion, then the idea of kinship between the Slavonic Enoch and the Hebrew Enoch can be entertained, but if one wishes to assert that some late medieval Jewish scholars actually used the Slavonic version and that "the Book of the Secrets of Enoch could have been carried as far as Germany and France by learned Jewish merchants in its Slavonic version ..." (p. 127) then one has entered the realm of fantasy. A real contribution to Jewish intellectual history would be made by Milik if he could bring evidence for the existence of Jewish scholars or learned merchants familiar with literature in Slavonic.

Building on the sixteenth century date and the German Jewish origin of the copyist of the manuscript which formed the basis of Odeberg's edition, Milik seems to imply that 3 Enoch is a compilation by that German Jewish copyist, although he concedes that some older

²³ These are reviewed in Greenfield, *Prolegomenon*, pp. xviii-xxi; Andersen's preliminary considerations were set forth in the paper he read to the SNTS seminar on Enoch in Tübingen, August 1977. On possible evidence for the knowledge of second Enoch in Europe in the early middle ages (perhaps sixth century) see D. M. Dumville, "Biblical Apocrypha and the Early Irish: A Preliminary Investigation," *Proc. Royal Irish Acad.* 73 c. 8 (1973) 318-9.

²⁴ Cf. P. S. Alexander, "The Historical Setting of the Hebrew Book of Enoch," *JJS* 28 (1977) 156-180 for a detailed discussion of many problems relating to 3 Enoch and pp. 159-161 for Slavonic Enoch 22 and 3 Enoch.

sources may have been used (p. 126). He does not deal with the dating of these sources in detail except in certain respects. On p. 127 he states that "recent research into the origins of the Cabbala in Western Europe, in particular the work of G. G. Scholem, definitely excludes a date earlier than the twelfth century for the greater part of the theological and mystical theories contained in the Hebrew Enoch" (p. 127). This astounding statement is undocumented, which is regrettable since the source of the views here attributed to Scholem would be well worth knowing.

In his major English books, first in *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (N.Y.: Schocken, 1941) 40-79 and subsequently in his *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition* (NY: JTS, 1960) Scholem demonstrated that the Merkabah and Hekhalot literature to which 3 Enoch appertains, stands in a line of terminological and conceptual continuity with certain allusions to Chariot mysticism in Tannaitic and Amoraic sources. Moreover this same type of speculation is clearly referred to as received tradition in the epistle of Hai Gaon. In this document (written about 1000 C.E.) Hai ben Sherira, head of a Babylonian academy, refers to the contemporary practice of Merkabah mysticism. The techniques are those known from the literature, and Hai Gaon himself refers to their use and the "whispering of many hymns and songs known from tradition".²⁵ By his time, then, the active practices of the mystics of the Merkabah type in Babylon were based on texts transmitted from the past. Furthermore, fragments of this literature have been found among the manuscripts of the Cairo Geniza, dating from the 11th and 12th centuries. Thus it seems strange to read that Scholem, whose work showed the antiquity of these writings, and who preferred a 6th century date, should be adduced to prove them to be post-twelfth century European compositions.

What is apparently behind Milik's statement is Scholem's demonstration that Spanish Kabbalism took its start in the late 12th century and that the *Zohar* was written by Isaac de Leon in Spain soon after 1268.²⁶ Scholem then outlined the development of the Cabalistic doctrine (and the term Cabbala should only be applied to

²⁵ Scholem, *Major Trends*, 49.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 119-204.

documents from the time of the Provençal and Spanish schools) in the various stages and traditions of Jewish mysticism in the Middle Ages. Early Spanish Cabbalism, the *Zohar* itself, the Lurianic Cabbala of the Safed school, and so forth. This is the chief achievement of his central work, *Major Trends*. For the purposes of our discussion, it is important to note that all mystical writings in Judaism were to a greater or lesser extent influenced by the innovative ideas and permeated by the distinctive terminology of Cabbalism and particularly of the *Zohar*, once that work had been written. Moreover, after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, the spread and popularization of Cabbalistic ideas and terminology became ever more marked.

The Merkabah literature, however, is not related to these streams of mystical thinking. It finds its closest connections with Tannaitic and Amoraitic texts on the one hand (not to mention 1 Enoch chap. 14; *Apocalypse of Moses*, chap 34; *Apocalypse of Abraham*, chaps 17-18 etc.; as well as the *Angelic Liturgy* from Qumrân) and with Hai Gaon's references to the tradition of secret teachings on the other.

Another element which vitiates Milik's discussion of 3 Enoch is his lack of familiarity with the textual tradition of this book; the existence of earlier and better manuscripts and of superior printed editions. Thus, his judgment (p. 125, n.1) that "Odeberg's edition supersedes A. Jellinek's edition, which reproduces a rather poor text" is wrong. Scholem's judgment, stated already in 1930, was that the Oxford Ms. used by Odeberg was not a good text, that Odeberg's stemma was wrong, and that the text published by Jellinek was superior. Scholem pointed out the existence of other manuscripts and printed texts.²⁷ This judgment is shared by Ithamar Gruenwald who has prepared a critical edition of the text and by others who have dealt with it in detail. It is quite possible that Scholem's sixth century date for 3 Enoch is too exact, but it best fits the wider limits of 450 CE—850 CE recently suggested by P. S. Alexander for 3 Enoch 3-15, the kernel of the work.²⁸

Since Enoch and Metatron are identified in 3 Enoch, Milik deals with the role of Metatron in the Aramaic incantation bowls and offers

²⁷ Cf. Greenfield, *Prolegomenon*, pp. xxiv-xxvi.

²⁸ *JJS* (1977) 165.

a derivation of his own for this difficult title. But the treatment of the bowls does not hold up under close scrutiny nor can the interpretation of Metatron as coming from Latin *metator* be seriously entertained.²⁹ To judge from the notes Milik has not made use of Scholem's work on Jewish Gnosticism, or his other relevant work, or indeed of the work of other competent scholars in this field. It goes without saying that these learned asides on Metatron have little to do with the main purpose of the book at hand, an edition of the Aramaic texts of Enoch.

The magic bowls are referred to again in a chapter called "Later History" which comes at the end of the volume, (pp. 317-339). The later history is that of the *Book of Giants*. The relationship of the Manichaean *Book of Giants* to the Enoch literature was first seen by the great Iranianist W. B. Henning. It is to Milik's great credit that he recognized fragments of an Aramaic *Book of Giants* at Qumrân. Indeed to some extent this Aramaic Enoch edition is not complete since only some fragments of the Qumrân Aramaic *Book of Giants* are published here. But in the 'Later History' Milik presents us with an 'edition' of a supposed *Midrash of Shemhazai and Azael* complete with translations, notes and conclusions. This is not the place to analyse that work, but we would be failing in our duty to the readers were we not to caution them that in all its aspects it must be used with care. The supposed references to Enoch in the magic bowls, and the other material from the bowls supposedly dependent on the *Book of Giants*, also prove to be a chimera. The magic bowls published by J. A. Montgomery were studied over fifty years ago by J. N. Epstein who pointed out that the supposed references to Enoch did not exist.³⁰ The Enochian academy posited by Milik (p. 337) has no basis in the texts. The same can be said for Milik's fantastic statement (p. 339) that Rabbi Joseph bar Hiyya of Pumbeditha was the author of a supposed Jewish adaptation of the Manichaean *Book of the Giants*.

²⁹ Scholem has dealt with the problem of *metatron* in many of his works and the last word has undoubtedly not been said. For *metator*, cf. Alexander, *ibid.*, 163, n. 15. For the magic bowls, cf. Scholem, *Gnosticism*, passim; Greenfield, *Prolegomenon*, xxxviii-x1; Alexander, *JJS* (1977) 165-167.

³⁰ Cf. J. C. Greenfield, "Notes on Some Aramaic and Mandaic Magic Bowls", *JANES* 5 (1973) 149-156 and references there to Epstein's work.

There are other aspects of this work that call for close scrutiny—such as Milik's use of the Ethiopic Enoch and his scanting the value of the Ethiopic version (p. 88). This will surely be done by those more qualified than the present writers. Few scholars will agree with Milik's apodictic statements regarding the age of various literary works, e.g. 100-250 AD as the probable date for 4 Esdras and Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*. Nor will they agree with his statement 'that there is no valid proof of the existence of a Semitic original of either of them' (pp. 93-4). It is because of Milik's breadth of knowledge and his scope that the book will be used for more than reference to the diplomatic edition of the Qumrân Enoch. But for these very reasons, the work must be approached with caution and the author's opinions taken *cum grano salis*.

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BOOK REVIEWS

OLIVER, Victor L., *Caodai Spiritism*, A Study of religion in Vietnamese Society — Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1976, 145 p.

Signalons à toute fin utile que cet ouvrage a été publié en 1976 et que la préface du Professor Pierre Rondot est daté du 6 Mai 1975, c'est à dire six jours après la chute du gouvernement nationaliste du Sud-Vietnam (du Général Nguyen Van Thiêu). Depuis lors, le Sud-Vietnam a été rattaché au Nord-Vietnam et à partir de Mai 1975, date de la réunification du Vietnam, on n'entend plus parler de cette secte comme d'ailleurs des autres sectes religieuses telles que le Hoa Hao et certaines autres branches du Bouddhisme. C'est pourquoi à la lueur des derniers événements, l'ouvrage de M. Oliver s'avère très important et il peut être considéré comme l'un des rares documents écrits en anglais concernant cette secte avant la disparition du Sud-Vietnam. Il est juste de remarquer que le Sud-Vietnam a été créé en 1954 après l'armistice de Genève qui consacra la fin de la Ière Guerre d'Indochine entre la France et le Vietnam. Comme tout un chacun le sait, sous l'administration coloniale française, le Vietnam qui de tout temps a été une nation „une et indivisible”, ce Vietnam a été coupé en trois régions connues respectivement sous les noms de Tonkin, Annam et Cochinchine. C'est donc dans cette partie méridionale du Vietnam qu'est né le Caodaïsme, et pour écrire ce livre, bien documenté et avec des témoignages de première main, l'auteur a eu le privilège de vivre un certain temps parmi les nombreux fidèles caodaïstes, de connaître certaines personnalités haut placées dans la hiérarchie de cette secte et d'avoir ainsi accès à des documents souvent inédits ou inconnus du public. Comme il a dit lui même dans l'introduction, il a été souvent aidé par quelques principaux dignitaires du clergé caodaïste tels que Madame Cao Quynh Cu, M. M. Tran Quang Vinh, Tran Thai Chàn etc. — L'auteur a étudié avec une grande objectivité et une rigueur scientifique digne d'éloges, l'origine et le développement de cette grande secte religieuse qui connaissait un très grand essor dans le Sud du Vietnam. Avec cette chaleur humaine qu'il est rare de trouver chez des chercheurs, il a vécu au milieu de ces fervents adeptes caodaïstes auxquels il a voué une certaine affection, dans le but de mieux comprendre leur idéologie et de décrire leur vie commune. Vu son objectivité et l'esprit de son ouvrage, il risque de déplaire à certaines personnalités caodaïstes; ce risque, il l'a pressenti et il l'a dit d'ailleurs dans son introduction.

Il n'est pas dans notre intention de résumer l'admirable travail de M. V. Oliver qui renferme un mine de renseignements très intéres-

sants. Grosso modo, on peut y voir 5 grands chapitres. Tout d'abord, l'origine du Caodaïsme. L'auteur dénombre trois grandes influences; En premier lieu, l'influence chinoise, puis l'indienne, et enfin la dernière, mais non la moindre, l'influence française qui commence avec l'installation de la culture française au Vietnam dès la fin du XIX^e siècle. Souvenons nous que Descartes, Jeanne d'Arc, Pasteur et surtout Victor Hugo sont des Saints attitrés du Panthéon caodaïste, sans parler de Shakespeare et de Lénine. D'après notre auteur, dans le premier quart du XX^e siècle, cinq facteurs ont joué un rôle important dans la naissance du Caodaïsme, à savoir: le syncrétisme religieux propre à l'âme vietnamienne, les Sociétés secrètes qui pullulaient partout, un courant populaire antifrançais, ou plus exactement anti-colonialiste, les groupes politico-religieux „Minh” et en dernier lieu, la forte emprise du Spiritisme. Rien qu'à lire les revues caodaïstes, on voit nettement l'influence prépondérante du Spiritisme européen (anglais et surtout français, l'Ecole d'Allan Kardec était fort connue et appréciée des adeptes caodaïstes.)...

Le deuxième chapitre est tout entièrement consacré à l'Histoire et au développement de cette secte dont le fondateur est Ngo Minh Chiêu—né un certain jour de Février 1928—qui dans sa jeunesse a été largement influencé par les Classiques asiatiques et les oeuvres spirites de Kardec, Léon Dennis et Durville. ... Au cours de cette histoire, nous ferons connaissance avec d'autres dignitaires plus ou moins connus du public comme le „pape” Pham Công Tac, (1893-1958), M. Nguyen Trung Hâu, Mme Cao Quỳnh Cu, etc.... Le 3^e chapitre traite spécialement du Saint Siège caodaïste à Tây Ninh, de ses structures administratives, législatives, sociales, et aussi des organisations féminines qui jouent un très grand rôle dans les différentes activités religieuses. L'auteur attire notre attention sur les contrastes entre l'organisation religieuse de Tây Ninh et la secte „dissidente” du „Chiêu Minh Tam Thanh” née de la scission entre le fondateur Ngo Minh Chiêu et le „Tây Ninh Pho Loan”...

Le 4^e chapitre est consacré à l'étude du développement des différentes sous-sectes nées du Caodaïsme lui même et qui se propagent au Vietnam et au Cambodge. Des tentatives d'unification ont été enregistrées et notre auteur cite 4 principales organisations créées dans cette perspective comme le Phô Thông Giao ly, le Cao Đài Thông nhất, le Hôi Van hoa Cao đài, et enfin le Liên Minh Nhân si. Dans la conclusion, l'auteur a raison de dire qu'en tant que mouvement socio-religieux, le Caodaïsme mérite d'être étudié et qu'il a joué un certain rôle dans les sphères religieuses, politiques et sociales du Vietnam du Sud dans les cinquante dernières années. Son ouvrage comporte trois appendices très utiles (surtout le 3^e qui donne une description succincte des principales sous-sectes du Caodaïsme et de leur organisation). On peut regretter que notre auteur n'a pas eu le temps nécessaire de nous donner un tableau plus complet du développement du Caodaïsme et de ses

nombreuses différentes branches, par exemple celle du Vietnam septentrional, celle du Cambodge. — Les Lecteurs ne sont pas au courant des relations entre le Caodaïsme et les autres religions du pays, par exemple avec le Bouddhisme, le Catholicisme, le Taoïsme. ... On peut aussi relever quelques petites erreurs dans le corps de l'ouvrage. Ainsi, page 10, l'auteur dit que Ly Thai Bach est un poète vietnamien alors qu'en réalité, il est l'un des plus grands poètes de la Chine. On peut signaler à l'attention de l'auteur que le roman de Graham Greene „The Quiet American” comporte un bon chapitre sur les Caodaïstes, De même, l'article en français du professeur Michel Dufeil „Les sectes du Sud-Vietnam”, mérite d'être connu. De nombreux ouvrages en vietnamien sur le Bouddhisme contemporain comme ceux du Révérend Mât-thê ou du professeur Nguyen Dang Thuc sont dignes de figurer dans la Bibliographie bien fournie de l'auteur. A part ces quelques omissions ou erreurs bien minimes, nous souhaitons sincèrement que l'ouvrage de M.V.L. Oliver recevra la plus large audience auprès du public.

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BOLLÉE, Willem B., *Studien zum Sūyagaḍa*, Die Jainas und die anderen Weltanschauungen vor der Zeitwende, Textteile, Nij-jutti, Übersetzung und Anmerkungen, Teil I, Schriftenreihe des Südasien-Instituts der Universität Heidelberg 24 — Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1977, X + 219 p., 70 DM.

En rassemblant ces Studien zum Sūyagaḍa, M. Bollée s'est proposé d'explorer simultanément plusieurs des voies qui s'offrent au lecteur du Canon jaina (cf. l'Einleitung, p. 1-10).

Convaincu que les études jaina ont souffert de l'absence sinon totale, du moins générale, d'éditions critiques, il souhaite apporter une contribution à l'édition d'un des quatre textes les plus anciens du Canon śvetāmbara, le Sūy(agaḍa), deuxième anga, où sont, entre autres, évoquées les vues d'écoles religieuses et philosophiques rivales du jīnisme.

L'unité „thématique” des extraits choisis par M.B. tient précisément (comme l'indique le sous-titre) à ce que, dans tous, les philosophies élaborées par différents adversaires des sectateurs de Mahāvīra sont dénoncées, avec plus ou moins de clarté d'ailleurs. Ce „thème” resurgit en plusieurs autres livres du Canon; ¹ mais le Sūy est celui qui l'aborde

¹ En particulier, dans un autre des quatre traités anciens, l'Uttarajjhāyā, et dans le cinquième anga, la Vīyāhapannatti, „Proclamation des explications” jaina; cf. Jozef Deleu, *Vīyāhapannatti (Bhagavaī)* ..., Brugge 1970, index of terms and topics, s.v. *annautthiya*; id., 'Lord Mahāvīra and the Anyatīrthikas', in *Mahāvīra and his Teachings*, Bhagavān Mahāvīra 2500th Nirvāṇa Mahotsava Samiti, Bombay, 1977, 187-193.

le plus systématiquement, au point que, selon certains, il devrait son nom à ces „hérésies” dont il résume et condamne les dogmes essentiels (W. Schubring, *Die Lehre der Jainas*, § 45 p. 62, et Bollée p. 31-32, lequel voit, dans le titre de cette oeuvre, rédigée en prakrit ardhamagadhi, le reflet de s(ans)k(rit) *sūcā-kṛta*, ou *-gata*, cp. B(uddhist) H(ybrid) S(anskrit) *dr̥ṣṭi-k.*, *-g.*, pa(li) *dit̥ṭhi-gata*). L'intérêt historique de ces développements, en soi déjà considérable, est encore accru du fait qu'il en existe une sorte de contre-partie bouddhique, puisque, comme on sait, le premier des „longs” sutta en pa. critique les opinions philosophiques de plusieurs maîtres d'erreurs contemporains du Buddha (Dīgha Nikāya éd. PTS, I 1-46): les polémiques d'antan nous ont ainsi, involontairement, légué deux brèves esquisses, tracées par les deux principales sectes hétérodoxes, de la vie spéculative en Inde, vers la moitié du premier millénaire avant notre ère.

Parmi les passages qui, dans le Sūy, sont consacrés à l'examen de ces „hérésies”, les Studien ont choisi les suivants: les chapitres 1 à 4 inclus de la leçon initiale du premier livre, qui est le plus archaïque des deux (soit 88 strophes, presque toutes des śloka, p. 14-23), et, extraits du second livre, plus explicite, les paragraphes 2, 1, 13 à 34 (p. 24-28, en prose). On ne trouvera donc pas, dans ce volume, les leçons 1, 12 et 2, 5 à 7, comme on l'aurait peut-être attendu.

En revanche, d'autres documents importants sont ici regroupés. On sait que les vieux traités canoniques resteraient souvent obscurs sans le secours des commentateurs anciens; ils seraient parfois même inintelligibles lorsque leurs développements sont fortement allusifs, comme l'est le début du Sūy. Il est donc, pour ainsi dire, inévitable que M.B. allègue les docteurs du Moyen Age pour expliciter, au fur et à mesure, la traduction qu'il propose des énoncés du deuxième anga; il est heureux que, de plus, il résume souvent les traditions exégétiques, telles que nous les livrent la *cuṇṇi* (en prakrit, mais fortement sanskritisée) de Jinadāsa (ca. 7^e s.), et la *ṭikā* sanskrite de Śilāṅka (mi-9^e s.); M.B. va plus loin: il cite, traduit, éventuellement commente, les passages principaux de ces deux textes. Ainsi, tout en éclairant le traité canonique, il fournit des matériaux qui aideront les modernes à connaître directement les méthodes de la scolastique jaina et une phase particulièrement importante de la pensée indienne.² Parce qu'il juge

² Sur quoi, voilà bientôt un siècle, Ernst Leumann avait attiré l'attention, cf. 'Daśavaikālika-sūtra und -niryukti nach dem Erzählungsgehalt untersucht und herausgegeben von ...', *ZDMG* 46 (1892), 581-663; et encore id., *Übersicht über die Āvaśyaka-Literatur*. Aus dem Nachlass herausgegeben von Walther Schubring, Hamburg, 1934 (*ANIS* 4). La lignée des élèves de Leumann, à Hambourg, où M. Bollée lui-même a eu l'occasion de travailler, n'a pas cessé de s'intéresser à la littérature d'exégèse: W. Schubring, '150 Strophen Niryukti. Ein Blick in die Jaina Scholastik', *Festschrift Kirfel*, Bonn, 1955, 297-319; et, naguère, L. Alsdorf, 'Nikṣepa — A Jaina Contribution to scholastic Methodology', *JOI Baroda* 22 (1972-73), 455-463; id., 'Jaina exegetical Literature and the History of the Jain Canon', in *Mahāvīra and his Teachings*, 1-8.

le moment venu d'étudier l'oeuvre des commentateurs pour elle-même, et non plus seulement pour autant qu'elle permet de comprendre le texte de base (cf. *Einleitung*, p. 1-2), M.B. fait, en outre, précéder son édition du Sūy des trente-cinq strophes prakrites (en mètre āryā, p. 11-13) au moyen desquelles il est introduit par la nijjutti (*niryukti* **nirvyukti*, „analyse”), le plus ancien commentaire qui soit parvenu jusqu'à nous (fin du 1^{er} s.). L'édition et la traduction annotée des ces stances permettent de montrer quelques-uns des procédés favoris des docteurs jaina, notamment le *nikkheva* (*nikṣepa*, „schématisation”) qui examine systématiquement un mot ou un concept sous quatre (ou, souvent, sous six, etc.) de ses aspects (*nāma sthāpanā dravya (kāla kṣetra) bhāva*: dénomination, aspect, matière, (temps, espace), nature spirituelle).³

Le projet de M.B. était, on le voit, ambitieux. L'exécution l'est tout autant.

Pour établir le texte du Sūy, M.B. a disposé non de manuscrits, mais de leur équivalent⁴ soit plusieurs éditions indiennes qui, sauf une (d'ailleurs inachevée), ne sont en rien critiques. De leur examen, il résulte qu'elles représenteraient deux recensions différentes d'un même archétype, dont l'une a été connue de la *cuṇṇi*, l'autre (la meilleure, en général), de la *ṭikā* (p. 3-6). M.B. a collationné ces pièces avec soin, en a systématiquement consigné les variantes. Il est évident que l'éditeur d'un texte aussi difficile doit faire appel à toutes les ressources de l'érudition: on ne saurait mettre en doute celle de M.B., qui possède la connaissance intime du Sūy et de ses commentaires traditionnels, de la littérature canonique en général, avec ses termes techniques, ses formules et ses clichés, de la philologie et de la linguistique moyen indo-aryennes dans leur ensemble. Avec un zèle infatigable, tout ici est scruté, pesé, voire amendé, plus tard expliqué dans le commentaire littéral qui accompagne la traduction (*infra*); édition et interprétation sont indissolublement associées.

La traduction de M.B. (29-164) a naturellement grandement profité de celles, très remarquables, qui l'ont précédée: traduction intégrale, en anglais, de Jacobi (*SBE* 45, 1895), traduction partielle, en allemand, de Schubring, dans ses *Worte Mahāvīras* (1926), où sont également traduits les *Bambhacerāṃ*, première partie, archaïque, de l'Āyāraṅga (dont plus d'un passage peut être rapproché du Sūy), traductions de F. O. Schrader, dans son livre *Über den Stand der indischen Philosophie zur Zeit Mahāvīras und Buddhas* (1902). Elle doit aussi à diverses études récentes, telle celle de A. L. Basham, *History and*

³ Usuel dans les commentaires, ce procédé est préfiguré dans le Canon, cf. Bansidhar Bhatt, *The Canonical Nikṣepa*. Studies in Jaina Dialectics, Leiden 1978 (*Indologia Berolinensis* Band 5).

⁴ “Chaque impression a à peu près la valeur d'un bon manuscrit”, Ludwig Alshausen, *Les Etudes jaina* (Paris, 1965, 31).

Doctrines of the Ājīvikas (Londres, 1951). Mais, à juste titre, M.B. affirme vouloir garder une totale liberté par rapport à ses devanciers, d'autant que, comme il le note, ceux-ci ont parfois varié dans leur interprétation, ou ont négligé de la justifier, alors même que l'original est incertain. La présente traduction a le souci d'être fidèle en même temps qu'intelligible. Elle rend en allemand et, aussitôt après, commente les aphorismes, un à un, ou, si le sens y invite, en groupant deux à trois énoncés. Plus ou moins développé, le commentaire examine éventuellement les variantes des éditions de base, justifie la leçon ici adoptée, et, selon le cas, analyse les faits de langue, de style, de prosodie, relève les concordances ou les similitudes textuelles (y compris avec des fragments bouddhiques et des passages épiques, du Mahābhārata, en particulier), indique les difficultés et ambiguïtés du texte, rend compte, si nécessaire, de la traduction proposée, que M.B. confronte fréquemment avec celles de Jacobi et Schubring, soit qu'il les écarte toutes deux, soit qu'il marque les raisons de ses doutes et de ses préférences. Aux obstacles qu'oppose la langue du Sūy s'ajoutent les obscurités qu'entraînent ses développements elliptiques, procédant par brèves allusions (surtout dans les quatre premiers chapitres, versifiés); de surcroît, des incertitudes compliquent plusieurs passages où l'on devine que s'affrontent des antagonistes, sans que leur identité ou les limites de leurs énoncés soient expressément notées (cf. p. 116-7, ad 3, 14-15, etc.). C'est alors, évidemment, que les commentaires de Jinadāsa et Śīlānka apportent une aide irremplaçable; en effet, ils indiquent quelle école philosophique a chance d'être visée, quels thèmes elle développe (citations à l'appui), et, parfois, comment réfuter ses thèses. M.B. relate les analyses des exégètes, précise, éventuellement, les références des citations qu'ils insèrent, multiplie les possibles rapprochements, renvoie aux enseignements des Brāhmaṇa et des Upaniṣad, du Mahābhārata, des bouddhistes anciens, et, avec prudence, des darśana classiques. Toutes les ténèbres ne sont pas dissipées pour autant: plus d'une fois, les allusions impénétrables aux modernes l'ont également été pour les anciens, dont les interprétations sont, çà et là, douteuses ou vagues, contradictoires, anachroniques (107, 98, 99 ...).

M.B. affronte avec énergie la tâche qu'il s'est assignée, traquant les difficultés, ne reculant devant aucune analyse, aucune comparaison, aucune justification, aucun détail annexe, fût-ce la rectification d'une édition pa. (p. 113 n.36 et passim), ou d'un article de dictionnaire (149, 1-2), ou la discussion d'une glose de Nilakanṭha (82-83 n.12)... Pour corroborer une étymologie, justifier une forme ou un choix sémantique, montrer la portée d'un vocable, etc., des parallélismes sont examinés, des citations empruntées à différents textes de la littérature moyen indo-aryenne (jaina et bouddhique) et sk. ancienne, des comparaisons sont proposées avec telle expression ou tel développement védiques (passim), tel passage épique (passim), ou avec telle stance de la poésie lyrique classique (109 n.17, etc.); on trouvera, en outre,

dans ce volume, des références ethnographiques, le rappel de locutions grecques (p. 50 n. 98...), l'évocation de faits de civilisation celtiques, romains, germaniques, etc. (135, 132 ...).

Dans un tel fourmillement, il est à craindre que beaucoup d'observations et d'explications se perdent ou se retrouvent à grand peine. Je regrette donc l'absence d'index locorum, et d'index distinct des termes pa. et BHS, que M.B. pouvait dresser mieux que personne. En outre, à l'intention de ceux qu'intéressent surtout les doctrines, et pour remédier au caractère un peu diffus des polémiques jaina et, inévitablement, du commentaire littéral de M.B., il eût peut-être été souhaitable d'établir, d'autre part, un tableau de synthèse (cf. p. 80), ou, du moins, un index des noms des sectes et des docteurs que citent le Sūy et ses commentaires. Assurément, ces indications figurent dans l'index rerum (205-214); mais il incombe au lecteur intéressé de les isoler parmi des renvois de tout autre ordre (souvent grammatical et philologique). Au reste, ce livre, édité avec soin, se termine par une bibliographie copieuse, un index verborum (180-197), deux index des pāda, l'un normal, l'autre inverse, enfin, après l'index rerum, par une liste des pratika des principales citations des cuṇṇi et tikā, et une page d'additions.

Comme plusieurs autres publications récentes, cette étude extrêmement riche marque le progrès des études jaina et l'intérêt croissant porté à la littérature d'exégèse.

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Die Diskussion um das „Heilige“, herausgegeben von Carsten Colpe, Wege der Forschung, Band 305 — Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977, XXV + 500 p., DM 83.

Colpe bietet achtzehn Beiträge aus hundert Jahren in fünf Abschnitten. In dem Vorwort begründet er Absicht und Auswahl, unter Hinweis auf zahlreiche anderen Veröffentlichungen; Frau Rüd steuerte ein Namenregister bei. Fremdsprachige Aufsätze werden in deutscher Übersetzung mit Bemerkungen gegeben.

Die fünf Teile beschäftigen sich mit (I) Sprachgebrauch, (II) Heterogenie, (III) philologischer Erschließung, (IV) Ottos Theorie, und (V) neuen Problemstellungen.

Ein anregendes, sehr willkommenes Buch.

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The Nag Hammadi Library in English, Translated by Members of the Coptic Gnostic Library Project of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity under the directorship of James M. Robinson — New York and Leiden, Random House and E. J. Brill, 1977, XVI and 493 p.

The purpose of *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, according to Marvin Meyer, the Managing Editor, is "to provide, within the scope of a single volume, English translations of the Nag Hammadi tractates" (p. x). Thus for the first time since the discovery of the Library in 1945 the scholarly community and the public have been granted access into the inner world of the Gnostics, as expressed by the Gnostics themselves. For thirty-three years scholarly jealousies and political obstacles have discouraged this realization. The Coptic Gnostic Library Project members, and Dr. James M. Robinson in particular, are to be congratulated.

The Nag Hammadi Library comprises thirteen codices containing fifty-two tractates. Of these fifty-two tractates six are duplicates, six are already extant, and approximately ten are in fragmentary condition. Although the texts in the Coptic collection were found near the ancient site of Chenoboskeia in Egypt, originally they were composed in Greek in various heterogeneous environments such as Syria, Egypt and Italy during the first four centuries of our era. They provide proof that the Gnostic movements, although amorphous, were a continual threat to the developing Orthodox Church as well as evidence to support the thesis that the origins of Gnosticism may very well have been non-Christian!

The Nag Hammadi Library's content is so diversified that the texts will prove to be of interest to readers from many backgrounds. Mythologies, philosophies and re-interpretations of organized religion are all present. The Library destroys the theory that Gnosticism is an acute Hellenization of Christianity once and for all. Certain texts such as the *Apocalypse of Adam* and the *Paraphrase of Shem* seem to support the hypothesis that non-Christian Gnostics were in existence possibly even prior to Christianity. Other texts such as *Eugnostos the Blessed* and the *Sophia of Jesus Christ* allow us to witness the Christianizing process of an original non-Christian text. Such non-Christian texts have led many scholars to re-assess the role played by Judaism in the development of Gnosticism. This has led to a growing consensus that heterodox Judaism will feature prominently in any new theory concerning Gnostic origins. Among other things, such an analysis will necessitate a comparative study of Jewish and Gnostic Midrash, an area hitherto barely explored.

The Library demonstrates the multifaceted aspects of Gnosticism, two faces of which are especially notable: Valentinian and Sethian. It also clearly indicates that some of the Gnostic groups were to some

extent institutionalized, both ritualistically and ideologically. Furthermore, the Library attests to the fact that the Church Fathers were well-adept as heresy-hunters, robbing Christian Gnostics of legitimation on the one hand, while incorporating some of their allegorical arguments on the other. Thus we can no longer view early Christianity in monolithic terms. Rather, the epoch was one of fluidity where many Christian 'power' elites fought for their personal and selected definitions of reality.

The English translation is to be recommended as an introduction to the world of the Gnostics. The translators, by making use of a system of square brackets, pointed brackets, braces and parentheses, have attempted to give a complete critical edition to the manuscripts, as well as the texts they contain. Brief introductions precede the individual tractates. However, although the reader is warned that variations in English style and translational policy are to be expected (p. xi), it is disconcerting that not more standardization was imposed. For example, whereas some of the members of the Project indicate Old and New Testament passages that either are quoted or echoed by means of parenthesis (eg. CG I, 4, p. 51; CG II, 1, p. 111; CG II, 3, p. 134; CG II, 4, p. 153; CG II, 6, pp. 181-187; and CG IX, 3, p. 412), other members do not provide this important information for such tractates as CG I, 2; CG I, 3; CG II, 7; CG III, 4; CG VII, 3; CG VII, 4; CG VIII, 2; and CG XI, 1. It is unfortunate that these additional references were not provided. In addition, the unevenness of the introductions regarding suggested dates of composition and/or provenance leaves the reader disappointed. Mention should also be made of the fact that some contributing members were a little too generous in proposing suggestions how to fill in the lacunae. Unfortunately the volume is not completely free of typing viz. printing errors (p. 51 and p. 53; CG I, 4 and not I, 3).

Yet, despite its imperfections, there is little doubt that this volume at long last brings to the public a standard English reference text of the Nag Hammadi Library.

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WOLFSON, Harry A., *Studies in the History of Philosophy and Religion*, Volume Two, edited by Isadore Twersky and George H. Williams-Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1977, 639 p.

Professor Wolfson's death in 1974 left the world of humane letters much poorer than it was before. Wolfson had encyclopedic knowledge in the areas of West Asian and European philosophy and religion, as well as a felicitous style in which an intense striving for clarity and

grace were apparent. His contribution to the world of scholarship was weighty and included books entitled *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle*, his first book and perhaps his most original and fresh work, *Philo*, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, *The Philosophy of the Kalam* and the *Philosophy of Spinoza*. These works, some of them consisting of two volumes, formed part of what Wolfson called Philonic philosophy, that philosophy which was characterised by an attendant belief in prophetic revelation, until the hold of scripture was finally broken by Spinoza and the era of modern philosophy began. What ever one may think of this scheme, and it deserves a serious critique and review, the work of Wolfson is a monument to a magnificent conception of the history of philosophy and an attempt at understanding its structure.

In addition to the weighty tomes mentioned above, Wolfson in his prolific way composed numerous articles some of which were later incorporated into his books and some which were not. One of the many books which he did not have a chance to write was one on medieval Jewish philosophy. This second volume of his *Studies in the History of Philosophy and Religion* serves in a fragmented way to fulfill this lacuna in Wolfson's aspirations. Hallevi, Maimonides, Crescas, Saadia, and Spinoza are some of the principal figures dealt with in this volume, but also, as is typical for Wolfson, Thomas Aquinas, Aristotle, Averroes and Kant are not absent from its pages. The topics dealt with include design, chance, necessity, attributes of God and the predicables of Aristotle, medieval atomism, the trinity and incarnation, causality and miracles, and panpsychism. Rather than give a detailed table of contents, I should like to use the remaining space at my disposal to analyse briefly the structure of one of his articles and to remark concisely on Wolfson's method of textual investigation.

In his article entitled "The Aristotelian Predicables and Maimonides' Division of Attributes," Wolfson suggests an analysis and new interpretation of Maimonides' conception of the attributes of God in the light of his understanding of the Aristotelian predicables as dealt with throughout the *Corpus Aristotelicum*. First of all, Wolfson explains that Maimonides' definition of belief in *Moreh Nebukim*, I, 50 is a logical proposition and that Maimonides is mainly concerned with the definition of belief in logical terms, so that the problem of God's attributes resolves itself into a question of the logical status of propositions about the attributes which may be predicated of God. Here, the logical and the ontological merge, since a logical proposition according to Aristotle is a combination of terms in which there is "either truth and falsity" and that truth is to be tested by the correspondence of the ideas in our mind to objects outside our mind.

Then Wolfson begins the main work of the article which is to explain the origin of Maimonides' preliminary classification of the attributes of God into five categories: definition, part of definition, quality, relation, and action (or verb as Wolfson translates). He does

this by trying to trace the possible affiliation of Maimonides' scheme, which is unique, to various texts in Aristotle, Avicenna, Algazali, Abraham ibn Daud, and Porphyry. Here Wolfson tries to uncover the latent processes of Maimonides' reasoning—how Maimonides might have understood and deduced his classification from these thinkers, among whom the principal source is Aristotle. Wolfson's method, as he has characterised it, is hypothetico-deductive or the method of talmudic reasoning (*pilpul*) characteristic of the Lithuanian rabbinical academy (*yeshivah*) around the turn of the century when Wolfson came to the United States. The strength of this method is that it suggests possible interpretations of texts imaginatively; however, there is a tendency toward speculation which, if not carefully controlled, can lead to excess as occurred for example in the tendency to emend the masoretic text of the Hebrew bible by the more radical representatives of the higher criticism. Specifically, in our case, the more careful way would have been to examine the logical works of Alfarabi and Avempace, who served as the link of philosophy to Andalusia, which however still are for the most part in manuscript. Wolfson was a system builder, an architect of the vast humanistic scheme mentioned previously, and the kind of work required would necessarily have forced him to postpone the realization of his vision. He also may have thought that there was sufficient material available to back up his speculations. I should also add that many of these texts were discovered rather late in Wolfson's scholarly career. Those who follow in Wolfson's wake use his monumental knowledge in an attempt at achieving a more just appreciation of the thought of the Ancients and the Medievals based on a wider base of sources. But doesn't this fact merely emphasize the *process* of knowledge and its fluid character, its being subject to continuous reassessment? Wolfson remains and will remain an important link in the profound process of self understanding characterising the humanistic disciplines of the history of both philosophy and religion.

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Christian Faith in a Religiously Plural World, edited by Donald G. DAWE and John B. CARMAN — Maryknoll, Orbis Books, N.Y., 1978, 195 p., \$ 7.95.

This symposium comprises a dialogue about the place, meaning and attitude of Christianity in a world where enough Christians encounter religious pluralism to make the question of other religions a pressing one. It is some measure of the richness and diversity of approaches that no summary is possible. The special feature of the symposium is the presence of contributions from a Buddhist, a Hindu, a Jew and a

Muslim, commenting on the Christian attempts to pose the question of pluralism.

The key opening paper is provided by Donald G. Dawe who begins by commenting on the double-nature of Christian faith: its capacity to release love and destructiveness simultaneously and alternately. This is a polite beginning because it rather implies that this is peculiar to Christianity rather than being inherent in any universal claim. It would appear that some theologians can be as bothered by the logic of universality as by the logic of particularity. It is very awkward that truth should claim to start somewhere and equally awkward that it should claim to go everywhere. At any rate, Professor Dawe then proceeds with equal politeness to distinguish between a truth which shines as a form of illumination to be picked up elsewhere and one which suggests there is a difference between light and darkness. Even more politely he despatches the erroneous (sorry, distorted) version of the covenant put about by Christian triumphalism on the ground that it sees the covenant as already in part realised, whereas the true covenant remains in the future, which is the most convenient place for religious 'truth' to reside these days. This has an added advantage since in that eschatological future there will be no 'religion', no religious institutions, no mediation, and no mediator, due to the universal presence of God.

This is the politest suggestion of all, because it assures people of other faiths that they only have to put up with Christianity in the period prior to the Kingdom of God. Actually this last point is all very orthodox since it utilises essentially Christian themes to establish the 'end and meaning of religion'. It is as if Barth had been stood on his head and made a vehicle for taking in all 'religions' along with Christianity, rather than expelling all religions, including Christianity, in the interests of faith. Jesus Christ is understood as a 'name' standing for a pattern of self-abnegation, encoding (ugh!) the motif of death and resurrection as the key to the new being. Other religions are potent variations on this motif, which in Christianity is signalled by the name of Jesus. Christianity dies to itself in accordance with this motif, and thereby achieves truth in the very act of relativisation.

The Buddhist commentator finds the anti-institutional emphasis of this highly congenial. He makes eirenic comments on the inferiority of the idea of superior wisdom. He points out that Christianity would have been much nicer if it had never been institutionalised or had never been accepted to the point where it was part of power relationships. Nice religion has no truck with power or with institutions. He suggests that wherever Buddhism is sufficiently unorganised it is an anticipation of the views of the liberal intelligentsia.

The Hindu commentator restates Professor Dawe's broad thesis about pluralism, and points out that Hinduism respects *all* prophets and sages who have come to guide humanity and values each tradition

for the differences they contribute. At the same time the differences must be understood in relation to the similarities. Moreover, just as Christianity is not a religion, Hinduism is not a religion either: it is an attempt to produce internal equilibrium and external harmony. The Muslim commentator is equally all-embracing: 'if Muhammad and his followers believe in all prophets, all people must do and equally believe in him'. Jesus is one of the prophets: the incarnation is idolatry.

So far all the various commentators have emerged true to form, even if the form is *very* polite. The Jewish commentator, Dr. Borowitz, also runs true to form. In his view Professor Dawe has at last come round to early rabbinic teaching. He then proceeds to tear Professor Dawe apart in a particularly devastating but fairly polite way. I cannot repeat the argument here, but suffice to say that he concludes 'when done translating Christhood into humanisation, no particular truth, no special claim attaches to Jesus, the Christ, or to Christians'. Professor Dawe has destroyed the branch he sits on. How does Christianity itself validate this emptying out of its particularity, and how does Professor Dawe know that particularist symbols can be fully translated in universalist terms? For himself and for Judaism Dr. Borowitz rejects this universalisation. It is not death and resurrection, just death. Jews have discovered this for Judaism and feel it proper to warn Christians where the road is bound to lead. Dawe has not only stood Barth on his head, but has stood Kierkegaard on his head too. Kierkegaard thought he was validating truth as a particular individual matter, but Dawe has used existentialism to departicularise.

I may add that another Jew, Alfred Krass, who has become a 'conservative' Christian also takes Professor Dawe apart and manages to take Gregory Baum apart at the same time. He suggests that Christianity has not made its impact on the world merely by proclaiming that 'many paths lead to the top of Mount Fuji'. He suggests that Gregory Baum's rejection of mission would reduce Christianity to the culture-religion of the Christianised nations: 'the largest tribal god in history'. The argument is, of course, much more complex than this.

There are other articles, one on translational theology, one on a Buddhist idea of grace, together with a subtle discussion of the idea of religion by John Carman and interesting contributions by Charles Price and David Steindl-Kast. Wilfred Cantwell Smith delivers a very American blessing on the symposium, saying that the whole thing tore him apart, that what we have in common is not religion but humanity, and that he rejoices in, and is excited by the whole exercise.

Fair comment.

The London School of Economics
and Political Science

DAVID MARTIN

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OBITUARIES

Gustav Mensching

At the age of 77, Gustav Mensching, until his retirement professor at the University of Bonn, passed away on 30 September 1978 after a brief illness. As a disciple of Rudolf Otto and F. Heiler, he stood in the "apostolic succession" of the classical German school of *Religionswissenschaft* which, though today considered antiquated in many respects, was no doubt a decisive and pioneering stage in the development of the modern study of religion. Among Mensching's best-known and widely read publications are his systematic *Religionssoziologie* (descriptive, like Wach's, rather than research-oriented in the sense of modern sociology), his studies on "Tolerance and Truth in Religion" (1955) and "Miracles in the Faith and Superstition of peoples" (1957), and his writings on Indian religions, especially Buddhism. Shortly before his death he completed his last work *Buddha und Christus: ein Vergleich*. Students of religion will gratefully make use of much of Mensching's work for a long time to come.

Roger Caillois

Scholar and humanist, Roger Caillois (born 3-III-1913) passed away on 21 December, 1978. A member of the Académie Française, his influence transcended the world of French letters, particularly through his editorship of *Diogenes*, that excellent periodical which he conceived, inspired and guided for more than twenty-five years. Students of religion *stricto sensu* will remember Caillois as the author of his early classics *Le Mythe et l'Homme* (1938) and *L'Homme et le Sacré* (1939).

Ernst Benz

On 28 December 1978 Ernst Benz, for most of his teaching life professor in the Faculty of Theology of the University of Marburg, passed away at the age of 71 and was buried on January 4, 1979. His grave is only a few steps away from that of his regional compatriot Franz Anton Mesmer, to whose work and concept of "animal magnetism" Benz had devoted one of his most interesting monographs. This fact may serve as a symbol of the extraordinarily wide-ranging

erudition and interests of Benz, whose work dealt not only with “mainstream” phenomena (e.g., the Eastern Orthodox Church and its spirituality) but also with the “stepchildren” of religious history: the Christian Kabbalah, pietistic sects, “spiritual” and apocalyptic movements, as well as non-Christian religions and sects. Ernst Benz was a theologian, church historian, historian of religion and historian of ideas whose erudition was matched by his literary gifts. Profoundly aware of the irreducible pluralism of religions, he never fell prey to theological relativism and only rarely lapsed into an apologetic style. With his death we have lost one of the most monumentally erudite and fertile scholars of our generation.

Z. W.

CHRONICLE

The British Association for the History of Religions held its annual meeting at Oxford, 11-13 September, 1978. An account of the proceedings is given in the Bulletin of the British member group. A significant feature of the annual "business meeting" was the discussion of the problem of the annual conferences of national groups in years of international congresses. This is a question to which also other national groups might give some thought.

The Japanese Society for the Study of Religions held its annual meeting 3-5 November, 1978, at Kokugakuin University in Tokyo. Almost one thousand scholars attended and about three hundred papers were read in fields ranging from theology and philosophy, to folklore, sociology and anthropology, to the more traditional historico-philological study of religions.

The CISR (*Congrès International de Sociologie des Religions*) held a special meeting in Tokyo, 27-29 December, 1978. A number of eminent sociologists of religion from abroad attended to discuss "secularization" and "modernization" in religion with their Japanese colleagues, against the background of a modernised non-western civilization. Special attention and much discussion were devoted to the so-called "New Religions" of Japan, and the conference was followed by visits to the headquarters of several of these new religious groups. As is customary with the CISR, the conference proceedings (i.e. the papers presented at it) were printed and circulated *before* the beginning of the conference.

A New Zealand Association for the Study of Religions has been formed and will hold its first biennial conference at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, August 21-23, 1979.

A Swiss Association for the Study of Religion was founded in 1978 and has already proved itself to be very active. The Association formally constituted itself at its first General Assembly, held in June 1978 in Olten, which was part "business meeting" and part scientific colloquium.

Among new publication ventures, mention should be made of the series *Les Cahiers du CRSR*, published by the Centre de Recherches en Sociologie Religieuse of the Université Laval in Quebec, Canada. The first volume appeared in 1977, the second in 1978.

The Edwin Mellen Press (225 West 34th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001) announces four new series in religious studies: Texts and Studies in Religion; Studies in Women and Religion; Toronto Studies in Theology, and a Symposium Series—in addition to Special Bibliographies.

The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions (Melville Memorial Library, State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, N.Y. 11794, U.S.A.) plans a cumulative bibliographic periodical to be called *BTI* (Buddhist Text Information), and listing not only published work but also projects planned, in progress, or recently completed and awaiting publication. Interested scholars should contact the Director of the Institute.

Z. W.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Further to the events announced in previous issues (see NUMEN XXV, Fasc. 1 and 3), the following should be noted:

3-6 May, 1979

The 14th International Congress of Mediaeval Studies will be held at the traditional venue, the Mediaeval Institute, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Mich. 49008, U.S.A.

10-15 September, 1979

The date of the Warsaw Colloquium (see NUMEN XXV, Fasc. 3) has now been definitively fixed for September 10-15. The address of the Organizing Committee is: Polskie Towarzystwo Religionawcze (att'n Prof. W. Tyloch), Palac Kultury i Nauki p. xvi, pok. 1603, Warszawa, Poland.

20-22 September, 1979

The European Association for Japanese Studies will hold its next conference in Florence, Italy, in the latter half of September 1979; the general theme is "Tradition in Modern Japan". The richness and interest of the "religion" section are apparent from the report of the 1976 Zurich meeting, given in NUMEN XXV, Fasc. 3. The acting Convenor for Section 4, Religion and Philosophy, is Professor O. Lidin, East Asian Institute, University of Copenhagen, Kejsersgade 2, 1155 Copenhagen K, Denmark.

24-28 September, 1979

An international colloquium on "The Soteriology of the Oriental Cults in the Roman Empire" will be held in Rome, Sept. 24-28, 1979. The colloquium, organized by the Assoziazione Raffaele Pettazoni in conjunction with the Chair of the History of Religions at the University of Rome, and co-sponsored by the IAHR, will be directed by Professors U. Bianchi and A. Bausani. Contact address: Prof. U. Bianchi, via Principe Amedeo 75, I-00185 Roma, Italia.

December 1979

The Second Conference of the International Association of Buddhist Studies will be held, at the invitation of the Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, at Nalanda (Bihar, India) on or about the 20th to the 23rd of the month. Information from the General Secretary of the Association, Prof. A. K. Narain, Dept. of South Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin 53706, U.S.A.

August 1980

The Program Committee of the I.A.H.R. invites scholars to submit proposals for papers or research reports to be read at the XIVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions at the University of Manitoba, August 17-21, 1980. The general theme of the Congress is TRADITIONS IN CONTACT AND CHANGE. The program of the Congress will be carried in twenty sections as listed below. Proposals should reach the section coordinators not later than 1 September, 1979.

Submissions should be sent directly to the appropriate section coordinator. The paper should be submitted in as complete a form as possible and be accompanied by a 200 word abstract. (Official languages of the Congress are English, German, French and Italian.) Those making submissions may expect to hear from section coordinators by January 1, 1980.

African Religions Benjamin C. Ray, Department of Religious Studies, Cooke Hall, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903.

Near Eastern/Mediterranean Antiquity William Klassen, Department of Religion, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2.

Buddhism Leslie S. Kawamura, Department of Religious Studies, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4.

Christianity Michel Despland, Department of Religion, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West, Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8.

East Asian Religions Yün-hua Jan, Department of Religious Studies, McMaster University, 1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4K1.

Indian Religions K. K. Klostermaier, Department of Religion, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2.

Islam Earle H. Waugh, Department of Religious Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T2G 2E6.

Judaism Alan F. Segal, Centre for Religious Studies, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1.

Native Traditions in the Americas Peter J. C. Hordern, Department of Religion, Brandon University, Brandon, Manitoba R7A 6A9.

Methodology and Hermeneutics Willard G. Oxtoby, School of Graduate Studies, Centre for Religious Studies, University of Toronto, Toronto Ontario M5S 1A1.

Comparative and Phenomenological Studies Yvon Desrosiers, Département des Sciences Religieuses, Université du Québec à Montréal, C.P. 888, succursale A., Montréal, Québec H3C 3P8.

Anthropology of Religions Gustav Thaiss, Chairman, Department of Anthropology, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario M3J 1T3.

Linguistic & Textual Interpretations Eugene Combs, Department of Religious Studies, McMaster University, 1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4K1.

Psychology of Religion Harold G. Coward, Faculty of Humanities, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4.

Sociology of Religions R. Lemieux, Centre de Recherches en Sociologie Religieuse, Université Laval, Québec, P.O.

Philosophy of Religion Terence M. Penelhum, Calgary Institute for the Humanities, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4.

Femininity and Religions Penelope Washbourn, Department of Religion, St. John's College, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2M5.

Literature and Religions William C. James, Department of Religion, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6.

Aesthetics and Religions Phyllis Granoff, Department of Religious Studies, McMaster University, 1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4K9.

Religion, Ethics and Society Roger Hutchinson, Department of Religious Studies, University of Toronto, 110 Charles Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1.

Information and registration forms can also be obtained from the IAHR Congress Secretariat, c/o Dept. of Religion, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2, Canada.

Z. W.

VIEWS OF HOMERIC GODS AND RELIGION

B. C. DIETRICH

In Book 12 of the *Iliad* the Trojans with Zeus' support penetrated the camp of the Greeks. Despite the temporary delay in the crisis when Poseidon rallied the Achaeans, their situation was pretty desperate and Agamemnon, never filled with confidence, was once more ready to throw in the towel. There was only one hope for the Greeks: if Zeus' attention could be diverted from the battle, then Poseidon, and the other gods who favoured the Greek side, might intervene in the uneven fight. These events, of course, led up to the famous scene of Zeus' deception in the 14th Book of the *Iliad*. All went well and according to plan: Hera, who had armed herself like a hero going into battle, accomplished her purpose with the help of Aphrodite's magic band.

It is a charming scene with many touches of humour but also some alien notes. Who are these gods who so easily fell prey to common human desires, and why did Zeus declare his love for Hera in a way which could not fail to offend his jealous wife? "... Never before," he said, has love for any goddess or woman so melted about the heart inside me, ... not ... when I loved the wife of Ixion, nor when I loved ... Danaë, ... Europa, ... Semele, or Alkmene, Demeter ... (or) Leto." ¹ Hera for once ignored the insult. She seemed quite unmoved by Zeus' catalogue of conquests. There is a clash between Hera's human nature as Zeus' wife in myth and the traditional long list of alliances between Zeus and mortal as well as divine ladies. A somewhat similar scene occurs in the fifth Book of the *Odyssey* when Calypso was moved to accuse the gods of selfishness, because she herself must release Odysseus though other goddesses had often made mortals their husbands, like Demeter who, "lay down with Jasion and loved him in a thrice-ploughed field." ²

It was Gilbert Murray, I think, who first explained such gross misconduct on historical grounds. Homer's gods had originally been nature powers but in later times retained their characteristics as figures

¹ *Il.* 14, 215ff. Here and elsewhere Lattimore's translation has been used.

² *Od.* 5, 126f.

of vegetation and fertility. Demeter's Sacred Marriage with Jasion in the ploughed field ensured its fruitfulness for the coming season. Thus, we might go on, Calypso not only seriously misread the historical evidence by reducing a symbolic sacred act to the level of human misconduct, but the myths of Demeter and Jasion and of Zeus' many amours were conceived relatively late as somewhat desperate *aitia* to explain obscure religious practices from the past. The poet of *Iliad* 14 also saw the beneficent effect on nature of the union between Zeus the Weather-god and Hera his wife and sister. Despite its ridiculous features and distinctive flavour of divine burlesque, the scene ends on a splendidly lyrical and almost noble note.

"There underneath them the divine earth broke into young, fresh grass, and into dewy clover, crocus and hyacinth so thick and soft it held the hard ground deep away from them. There they lay down together and drew about them a golden wonderful cloud, and from it the glimmering dew descended."³

There is a contrast, which was obviously intended by the poet, between the serious and frivolous aspects of the gods. Another quite confusing mixture of opposites seems to be the juxtaposition of old and new in both passages. The figures of Zeus and Hera, like the ritual involving Demeter and Jasion, were rooted in the past. In fact Zeus and Hera already appeared together on the Linear B tablets from Knossos and Pylos, that is at least as early as the thirteenth century B.C.⁴ But their functions, behaviour and degree of humanisation, although to some extent indebted to oriental precedent, were essentially new and tailored to fit the needs of epic poetry.

One might also be inclined to attribute the elements of divine burlesque to the epic poet's irreverent treatment of traditional gods whose real religious significance had faded away. But Homeric religion was not as simple as that, nor was undignified divine behaviour uncommon in ancient belief. Hittite gods for example frequently acted in unseemly manner⁵ and the fashion, which became common in drama from Attic Middle Comedy, of reducing the gods to figures of fun did not really originate with Homer, or, incidentally, prove that the Greeks lacked

³ *Il.* 14, 343-351.

⁴ *da-ma-te* once in Pylos, PY En 609, but the identification with the goddess remains very uncertain, J. Chadwick-L. Baumbach, *Glotta* 41 (1963) 184; 49 (1971) 163. Zeus and Hera, PY Tn 316; Zeus alone KN F51 etc.

⁵ Cf. O. R. Gurney, *The Hittites*², Penguin Books 1961, 157.

faith in their gods. Obviously many outside forces helped to shape aspects of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the long period of their formation.

The mixture of old and new, strange and familiar is particularly evident in another episode in which the extreme humanisation of the gods was combined with ridicule. This is the tale of Ares and Aphrodite which Demodocus recited at Alcinous' banquet in honour of Odysseus.⁶ It is a famous Story. Informed by Helios, the Sun-god, of Aphrodite's misconduct with Ares, her husband Hephaestus caught the pair *in flagranti delicto* and bound them with chains. But instead of hiding his shame the injured Hephaestus then summoned all fellow Olympians to the scene as witnesses.

"Father Zeus," he cried, "and all you other blessed immortal gods, come here, to see a ridiculous sight, no seemly matter, how Aphrodite daughter of Zeus holds me in little favour, but she loves ruinous Ares because he is handsome, and goes sound on his feet, while I am misshapen from birth..."⁷

The goddesses stayed away through modesty, but Poseidon, Apollo and Hermes hurried to the scene in answer to Hephaestus' invitation, and "among the blessed immortals uncontrollable laughter went up." Curiously the divine sense of humour responded not so much to the picture of Ares and Aphrodite in bed together, or to the discomfiture of the cuckolded husband, but mainly to his skill, because the lame Hephaestus was able to catch Ares, "the swiftest of all the gods on Olympus."⁸

The episode has been much discussed by modern scholars, since the gods appear to have passed all bounds of propriety and patently descended to the level of immoral behaviour. Apollo actually asked Hermes whether he would risk an equal penalty in order to win Aphrodite's favours, to which Hermes irresponsibly replied that he would gladly suffer "thrice this number of endless fastenings, and all you gods could be looking on and all the goddesses, and still I would sleep by the side of Aphrodite the golden."⁹ Such conduct seems out of context in the *Odyssey* where the gods generally presented a more moral front than in the earlier epic.

Quite true, the scurrilous tale was sandwiched between two others

⁶ *Od.* 8, 266-366.

⁷ *Od.* 8, 306-311.

⁸ Cf. W. Burkert, "Das Lied von Ares und Aphrodite," *R.M.* 103 (1960) 142.

⁹ *Od.* 8, 340-342.

from the history of the Trojan conflict, namely the account of the quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles,¹⁰ and the story of the Wooden Horse.¹¹ Therefore one might classify the first as a memory of divine behaviour in the *Iliad* on a par with the notorious Fight of the Gods in Book 21, or with the scene of Hera's seduction of Zeus.¹² But there is one vital difference: the squabbling in Book 21, like the scene of Hera and Zeus in 12, and indeed all instances of ungodlike Olympian conduct in the *Iliad* formed part of the Trojan legend, that is they directly belonged to the plot of that epic. In other words the poets had a hand in determining divine attitudes and actions which were made to conform with the immediate needs of the story. This condition is particularly evident in the Theomachy in which the gods, who had been paired off in Book 20,¹³ fought as champions of either the Greeks or Trojans. The undignified episode, which was linked to the preceding battle between Xanthus and Hephaestus, was strictly partisan: Athena knocked down Ares and Aphrodite as prolongers of the war.¹⁴ Poseidon's challenge of Apollo was similarly motivated: he blamed Apollo for favouring the Trojans although he had been cheated of his just rewards by Laomedon.

The case is different in the Ares-Aphrodite story which seems less anchored in the immediate present of the Trojan War but was important and well known enough to figure on an 8th/7th century B.C. vase.¹⁵ The story concealed traditional elements. How many and how old is hard to say, as Homer was fond of bringing together separate traditions and using them for his own purposes. Zeus' scales of fate and death for example, or the story of Achilles' horse Xanthus, which took voice at a critical moment in the *Iliad*,¹⁶ were such mixtures of old and new. Similarly the device of golden chains to hold an enemy or opponent may have first occurred in the myth of Hephaestus binding

¹⁰ 8, 73-82.

¹¹ 8, 499-520.

¹² See Burkert, *R.M.* 103 (1960) 136-139.

¹³ Except for Aphrodite who was omitted from the list in *Il.* 20, 33-40 and 67-74; cf. M. M. Willcock, *A Companion to the Iliad*, Chicago 1976, 238.

¹⁴ *Il.* 21, 432f.

¹⁵ A fragment survives from the sanctuary of Hephaestus in Hephaisteia on Lemnos, showing a nude goddess and male figure in bonds, M. A. Della Seta, *Eph. Arch.* 1937 (1939) 649ff.; Ch. Picard, *Rev. Arch.* (1942/3) 96-124.

¹⁶ See my "Xanthus' Prediction," *Acta Classica* 7 (1964) 9-24, and "The Judgment of Zeus," *R.M.* 107 (1964) 97-125.

Hera¹⁷ and thence been conveniently transferred to this incident. However, if true this does not reflect on the age of the legend. There is no doubt that the association of Aphrodite and Hephaestus was very old indeed. Certainly the burlesque element in the story need be no argument to the contrary.

Scholars have long wondered why Aphrodite should have been wedded to the lame, ugly and absurd Smith-god. The explanation lies in the history of cult in the eastern Mediterranean and particularly in Anatolia and Syria, that is that part of the world which was nearer the home of both figures than the west. In the east, in areas of rich mineral deposits, metal mining and production brought prosperity to a settlement. The deities of such communities therefore were guardians of this vital industry: their sanctuaries stood within the actual "industrial" area and their cult images—male and female—were sometimes shown standing on metal ingots. Examples of this practice from the Late Bronze Age have come to light in Sinai for example, where a goddess received worship in a sanctuary of the XII Dynasty at Serabit el-Khadem within a copper mining area.¹⁸ A thirteenth century B.C. sanctuary of Hathor has also come to light near copper mines at Timna.¹⁹ At Sardis in Anatolia the Pactolus gold-refining installations were next to the sacred area and altar of Cybele.²⁰ Another name in this context is that of the 14th century B.C. Smith-god Kothar-Khasis who played a part in Ugaritic myth.²¹

However, the finest examples of the identification of the community god and goddess with the mining industry come to us from Cyprus which was of course the most important centre of copper production in the ancient world. The recent excavations of prehistoric settlements throughout the island and particularly at Tamassos, Enkomi and Kition have produced numerous instances of sanctuary and images associated with the copper workings. The remarkable fact emerging from all the

¹⁷ Burkert, *R.M.* 103 (1960) 132.

¹⁸ V. Karageorghis, *Kition: Mycenaean and Phoenician Discoveries in Cyprus*, London 1976, 75.

¹⁹ B. Rothenberg, *Timna, Valley of the Biblical Copper Mines*, 1972.

²⁰ M. A. Hanfmann-J. Waldbaum, *Bull. Americ. Schools of Oriental Research* 199 (1970) 7ff., fig. 8.

²¹ M. Sznycer, in *Suppl. au Dictionnaire de la Bible VIII*, fasc. 47 (1972) col. 1384ff.

Cypriot evidence is the continuity of religious cult at these sites.²² The figures, who had evolved from guardians of the community to become the protectors of the community's metal work, essentially remained the same from Mycenaean to Phoenician and Classical Greek times, although their names might have changed with the people, as say from Aphrodite to Astarte.²³ Quite regularly, too, communities worshipped not one but two copper deities: probably one god and one goddess. Temples II and III at Kition for example from the thirteenth century B.C. were the home of such a pair which became known in historical times as Hephaestus and Aphrodite.²⁴ Evidently the Smith-god and goddess had been allied in cult from the Bronze Age and enjoyed the highest standing in the east as chief deities and protectors of their communities.

The story was different in the west partly for economical reasons. Metal production and export did not constitute important sources of revenue in that part of the world. Also the artisan class for a long time remained socially inferior in Greece. This message clearly emerges from Hesiod's *Works and Days*. Hephaestus accordingly became respectable in the west only relatively late. In Athens his first temple, which incidentally stood near some metallurgical installations in the *agora*, was built in the sixth century B.C. presumably to honour him as patron god of the guild of metal workers.²⁵ To Homer, though, the artisan god was still ugly, ridiculous and, like Aphrodite, of little consequence in the Olympian hierarchy. Hephaestus belonged to another class, if not world, with different values, for his unmatched technical skill was never questioned. In Book 18 of the *Iliad* in the description of the making of Achilles' new armour Hephaestus' ability as smith received its due. The poet in a transparent Hesiodic-type allegory personified Grace, Charis, and made her Hephaestus' wife,

²² Karageorghis, *Kition* 75; 171; 172; cf. the review of the book by J. N. Coldstream in *J.H.S.* 97 (1977) 213.

²³ Religious continuity seems certain, but one should perhaps not overlook archaeological breaks between periods as at Kition for example where some 150 years elapsed between the end of the Mycenaean ashlar temples and the erection in the ruins of the largest of these of the Phoenician Astarte temple.

²⁴ Karageorghis, *Kition* 169f.

²⁵ Karageorghis, *Acts of the Intern. Arch. Symp.: the Mycenaeans in the Eastern Mediterranean*, 1973, 108 n. 10.

because, as one of the scholiasts aptly put it, "*charis* must ever be the companion of *technē*," that is technical skill.²⁶

The background to the Ares-Aphrodite story provides a most rewarding insight into the workings of Homeric epic. Traditional and imported religious elements existed side by side, or had been compounded, with the poet's own conception of the gods thereby creating contrast and indeed tensions which occasionally produced irrational elements in divine behaviour. The marriage of Hephaestus and Aphrodite, which was eminently reasonable in the light of past cult association, became the silly mismatch of the ages in the context of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* where the union between War and Beauty seemed closer to epic values. In fact both Ares and Aphrodite shared an interest in the Trojan cause and proved their friendship more than once in the *Iliad*. Ares lent her his horses when she was wounded and in pain and wished to run from the battle,²⁷ while Aphrodite stood by Ares when he was under attack from Athena.²⁸

It would be hard to find a better example in Homer of poetic convenience clashing with traditional myth.²⁹ The latter was clearly incorporated in Demodocus' song. However the extreme humanisation of the situation and of the figures involved in it brilliantly reflected the poetic view of the working of the gods. In the general laughter of the Olympians Poseidon alone remained serious and attempted to mediate, like Hephaestus on another occasion in a quarrel between Zeus and Hera.³⁰ But while Hephaestus advised Hera to remember past experience and submit to Zeus' superior strength, Poseidon in this episode guaranteed financial restitution to the injured husband if he should release the adulterous Ares.³¹ Without regard to the morals of the case, it is worth noting the legal type of argument in the remarkable ending to this amusing escapade, and the thought that the gods could incur guilt through their actions.

²⁶ Schol. on *Il.* 18, 382, ἔτι τῇ τέχνῃ τὴν χάριν προσεῖναι δεῖ. The next step of this piece of *mythopoia* was taken by Hesiod who formalized the allegory by naming the wife Aglaia, that is the youngest of the Graces, *Theog.* 945.

²⁷ *Il.* 5, 359ff.

²⁸ *Il.* 21, 415ff.

²⁹ For a different view see Burkert, *R.M.* (1960) 133, who did not take the latest archaeological evidence into account.

³⁰ *Il.* 1, 571ff.

³¹ *Od.* 8, 347-358.

Perhaps then the Homeric gods moved in some kind of fourth dimension in which they disported themselves like men but without acknowledging any kind of responsibilities or even any close relationship with the world of men. The poets' answer to a question along these lines would most likely have been ambiguous. On one side the gods clearly felt superior to man on moral and all other grounds, continually admonishing one another not to quarrel for the sake of base mankind.³² However, on the other hand every one of the Olympians was deeply involved in the doings and events of the plot. Homeric theology obviously wanted and got it both ways even at the cost of creating new contradictions. The contrast appears particularly strong in the *Iliad*, and the participants in the adventure of Ares and Aphrodite seem more closely related to the picture of the gods in that epic.

It has been suggested that the free and irresponsible behaviour of the gods in the *Iliad* may have been the poet's way of throwing the more serious consequences of comparable human action into stronger relief. In other words the gods in their vast superiority carelessly engaged in actions which on the human scale would and did have disastrous effects.³³ Thus Ares' affair with Aphrodite ended in laughter and a fine but Paris' abduction of Helen in bloody war and the destruction of Troy. This modern view seems plausible except for the implication that the gods in the *Iliad* were poetic invention without roots in the past.

No one still seriously disputes the Bronze Age Mycenaean ancestry of the Homeric gods. They were real figures of faith, no less real in fact to Homer's audience than the epic heroes themselves, and no less "historical" than the account of the conflict about Troy. Hence the manner of praying, the ritual and form of sacrifice, which were frequently described in considerable detail in both *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, can be recognized as those of the archaic Greek world and probably did not greatly differ from Mycenaean practice if one could reconstruct ancient procedure. These points have been overlooked by some modern scholars who lost their way in the philological detail of the poems.³⁴ No such doubts existed throughout Greek history, and even

³² E.g. *Il.* 1, 574; 21, 379f.; 463f.

³³ Burkert, R.M. (1960) 140; A Lesky, "Homeros," *P.-W. Suppl.* XI (1967) 47.

³⁴ Cf. A. Heubeck, *Die Homerische Frage*, Darmstadt 1974, 178.

Thucydides, who could be hypercritical of myth, accepted the Trojan War and the gods involved in it as fact.

Thus we may unhesitatingly reject extreme views that the Homeric gods had no religious meaning at all.³⁵ The truth lies somewhere nearer W. F. Otto's identification of Homeric with Greek Religion.³⁶ Also, for all their anthropomorphism, Homer's gods were something more than the reflection of human society on a grander scale, as Nilsson believed.³⁷ However, this is not the place to rehearse modern views of Homeric religion. Heubeck's recent study of the "Homerische Frage" and modern interpretations of Homer's "Weltanschauung"³⁸ illustrate the tremendous variety of opinions which tend to advocate one or two particular theories at the expense of others that may be equally plausible.

If we accept, as on the evidence we obviously should, the Olympian gods as real figures of faith and worship, the next logical step should be to examine their credentials in living contemporary cult. There has been endless talk of the different levels of religion in Homer, particularly of the division between popular belief and literary religion.³⁹ Although the Homeric picture of cult and temples hardly reflected that from the archaeological remains of the Greek world,⁴⁰ it does not require much effort to establish beyond reasonable doubt firstly that Homer was aware of past religious tradition and secondly that the majority of the members of his Olympian family possessed familiar cult names. But few cult localities or cults were actually identified in Homer, in the main because neither epic concerned itself with that aspect of life, but also for other reasons as will become evident in a

³⁵ P. Masson (ed.), *Introduction à l'Iliade*, Paris 1948.

³⁶ W. F. Otto, *Die Götter Griechenlands*⁴, 1956; cf. W. Burkert's review of W. Kullmann, *Das Wirken der Götter in der Ilias. Untersuchungen zur Frage der Entstehung des homerischen 'Götterapparats'*, 1956, Diss. Berlin 1952 in *Gnomon* 29 (1957) 164-170.

³⁷ In Nilsson's opinion the gods in Homer were modelled on the Mycenaean society and represented a kind of machine or mechanical poetic device for the working out of the plot, "Götter und Psychologie bei Homer," *A.f.R.* 22 (1924) 366ff.; *Gesch. d. griechischen Religion* 3, Munich 1967, 368-374.

³⁸ A. Heubeck, *Die Homerische Frage. Ein Bericht über die Forschung der letzten Jahrzehnte (Erträge der Forschung)*, Darmstadt 1974, 177-197.

³⁹ E.g. E. Heden, *Homerische Götterstudien*, Diss. Uppsala 1912, 18 and *passim*, where it all started. Cf. my *Death, Fate and the Gods*, 181f.

⁴⁰ See E. Vermeule, *Götterkult (Archaeologia Homerica)* Göttingen 1974.

moment. All we get are memories and hints like the mention of Poseidon's grove at Onchestos,⁴¹ or the memory of his cult at Pylos, where he had been worshipped from Mycenaean times.⁴² At both sites Poseidon had played the part of a community god, however, in stark contrast to his function in Homer as god of the sea. The Catalogue of Ships alluded to Demeter's precinct in Thessalian Pyrasos.⁴³ Aphrodite took refuge at her altar and in her *temenos* in Cypriot Paphos after her humiliation at the hands of Hephaestus.⁴⁴ The monumental remains at both places prove presence of cult there from the Bronze Age or, at the former site, even earlier. But in Homer the goddesses were mere shadows of the past and certainly neither possessed her old status as community or city deity. Even Zeus' *temenos* and "smoking altar" on the peak of Mt. Ida in the Troad⁴⁵ seems quite divorced from any function as guardian of the community. Perhaps the same is not entirely true of Zeus' title as "ruler of wintry Dodona,"⁴⁶ whose oracle Odysseus consulted,⁴⁷ but generally Zeus' altars could be anywhere even outside the geographical limits of a community, in an army camp, on a ship, at home as well as in a city.

Only Athena and Apollo possessed temples in Homer in Athens and in Troy.⁴⁸ Apollo had two in the Troad, and, like his title of Smintheus by which the priest Chryse addressed him,⁴⁹ they belonged to him as city god and guardian.⁵⁰ Similarly the fact that one of Athena's temples also stood on the Trojan acropolis, next to that of Apollo,⁵¹ and the other on the Acropolis at Athens,⁵² is proof of her status as Polias. In their case cult and background survived clearly defined. But the same can not be said of other major Olympians.

Beside his two favourites Homer ignored cult and home of Hera

⁴¹ *Il.* 2, 50; *Hom. Hymn. Apollo* 230.

⁴² *Od.* 3, 33ff.

⁴³ *Il.* 2, 696.

⁴⁴ *Od.* 8, 363.

⁴⁵ *Il.* 8, 48.

⁴⁶ *Il.* 16, 233f.

⁴⁷ *Od.* 14, 327f.; 19, 296f.

⁴⁸ *Od.* 6, 10: Nausithous' temples on Scheria, and Helios' future temple, *Od.* 12, 346f., are not real exceptions.

⁴⁹ *Il.* 1, 39.

⁵⁰ *Il.* 5, 446; 7, 83: on the peak of the Trojan acropolis.

⁵¹ *Il.* 6, 297f.

⁵² *Il.* 2, 549.

and Artemis, for example, despite their long history and important functions. Both Apollo and Athena still kept one divine foot, or at least toe, in the old world of localised cult. For the rest, however, they were committed to progress, because they acted more commonly as general gods and champions of their side without appearing to be tied to particular cities. Thus Herodotus was only partly right in his famous assertion that Homer and Hesiod gave the gods their "names, honours, functions and their outward appearance."⁵³ The gods' names were old as were their cults, but their functions were subject to change causing the kind of ferment and tension which had been observed above.

Antithesis was of course the very life blood of classical Greeks in art, literature and in their very mode of expression and style. It would perhaps be rash to attribute to Homer the origins of this almost excessive preoccupation, but it certainly formed a basic element in the behaviour of the epic gods who were in a way subject to growing pains. Lesky has attempted to categorize some of the more striking examples of paradoxical, irrational and contradictory divine actions in sets of opposites. He contrasts the nearness of the gods to mankind with their occasional remoteness or distance, their kind actions with the cruelty of their dealings with men, and their sense of justice with their self-will.⁵⁴ On one hand Athena gave friendly counsel to Diomedes,⁵⁵ or plotted together with Odysseus for the destruction of the suitors,⁵⁶ on the other Apollo brutally reminded Diomedes of the gulf between man and gods,

"Strive no longer," he calls out to the hero, "to make yourself like the gods in mind, since never the same is the breed of gods, who are immortal, and men who walk groundling."⁵⁷

Contrast, too, Athena's kindness when she protected Menelaus from Pandarus' arrow like a mother who "brushes a fly away from a child,"⁵⁸ with the cruelty with which she delivered Hector into the

⁵³ 2, 53.

⁵⁴ A. Lesky, *A History of Greek Literature*, Sec. ed. transl. by J. Willis and Cornelis de Heer, London 1966, 66ff.; *P.W.* "Homerus," Suppl. XI (1967), 40.

⁵⁵ *Il.* 5, 799.

⁵⁶ *Od.* 13, 372.

⁵⁷ *Il.* 5, 440-442.

⁵⁸ *Il.* 4, 131.

hands of his enemy,⁵⁹ or Aphrodite's rescue of her darling Paris from certain death at the hands of Menelaus with her command to Helen to join Paris later during the same episode at the end of the third Book of the *Iliad*.

As far as it is possible to observe any strict categorization within Homeric religion these pairs do illustrate Lesky's theory without, however, providing evidence of different levels of popular and epic religion in Homer. A few antinomies could have been, and probably were, due to a clash of historic cult with epic theology, in the sense that a god's traditional function could be enlarged or altered altogether in the role he was assigned in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. There is for example a case to be made out for the special relationship of Athena with heroes like Diomedes and particularly Odysseus as a survival of the goddess' function in prehistoric Mycenaean times as palace goddess and protectress of the king.⁶⁰ Apollo's warning, on the other hand, of the wide gulf between gods and men is evidence of a new stage of religious evolution which became more commonplace in archaic and classical literature. But there is not the same easy division to be found in the antithesis between kind and cruel god, as both qualities seem to have been part of one religious complex, precisely like another possible set of contrasts between the ridiculous and the noble in divine actions.⁶¹ Contrast for example the undignified squabbling on Olympus in Book 21 of the *Iliad* with the noble lines in Book 1 when almighty Zeus granted Thetis her request,

"He spoke, the son of Kronos, and nodded his head with the dark brows,
and the immortally anointed hair of the great god swept from his divine
head, and all Olympus was shaken."⁶²

Irrational and contradictory behaviour was apparently inherent in the nature of the Homeric gods and only occasionally explicable on the grounds of historic development. Nor did the gods reflect only the interests of the upper crust, the "Herrenschicht," but they covered a wider spectrum of archaic Greek society. This is obvious in the case of the later poem, for simple folk like the swineherd Eumaeus could be seen to turn to the gods with his hopes, wishes and prayer. But there

⁵⁹ *Il.* 22, 214.

⁶⁰ Nilsson, *Gesch.* 3, I, 371; Dietrich, *Origins of Greek Religion*, Berlin 1974, 38f.

⁶¹ Cf. Heubeck, *Hom. Frage*, 185.

⁶² *Il.* 1, 528, 530.

is no good reason to assume a different, narrower divine concept for the *Iliad*, although its story primarily concerned the actions and interests of the ruling classes.

The gods' sense of justice was notoriously still underdeveloped in the *Iliad*, but it was there all the same, while conversely the socially more conscious *Odyssey* still retained glaring instances of divine self-interest. For example the narrow partisan attitudes of the gods of the *Iliad* contrast sharply with the picture in the *Patrocleia* of a righteous Zeus punishing injustice among men:

"When Zeus sends down the most violent waters in deep rage against mortals after they stir him to anger because in violent assembly they pass decrees that are crooked, and drive righteousness from among them and care nothing for what the gods think."⁶³

This passage, which Nilsson called a cry from the depth of despair,⁶⁴ already had the flavour of the later Hesiodic concept of *dike*, Justice⁶⁵ and leaves no doubt at all that Zeus was concerned with the justice of everyone in the city and not just the aristocratic rulers.

The concept of the gods as general moral powers is more at home in the *Odyssey* of course. In the very first Book Zeus at the council of gods blamed men for their own misdeeds.⁶⁶ There are three other famous passages in the *Odyssey* with clear expressions of belief in divine justice by three quite different members of Ithacan society, namely the swineherd Eumaeus,⁶⁷ the suitors,⁶⁸ and Laertes.⁶⁹ But there was also still a place for divine self-interest. Poseidon for example pursued his own private vendetta against Odysseus who blinded the god's son Polyphemus, although the latter had broken all laws of civilized behaviour and hospitality. Such laws fell within the province of Zeus Xeinios who protected the rights of all guests. This moral function of Zeus, which was several times expressed or implied elsewhere in the *Odyssey*,⁷⁰ therefore stood in strong contrast with the

⁶³ *Il.* 16, 385-388.

⁶⁴ *Gesch.* 3 I, 421, "ein Aufschrei aus der Tiefe, der dem Homer sehr unähnlich ist."

⁶⁵ Nilsson, *ibid.*; cf. Lesky, *P.W.* 40.

⁶⁶ *Od.* 1, 32ff.

⁶⁷ *Od.* 14, 83f.

⁶⁸ Except Antinous of course, 17, 485ff.

⁶⁹ 24, 351f.

⁷⁰ *od.* 6, 207; 9, 269; 14, 57f.; 158; 282; 388.

highly personal reasons for Poseidon's wrath. It is an interesting thought that Poseidon's anger, as the cause of Odysseus' suffering and wanderings, constituted an important element in the plot of the *Odyssey*, while the punishment of Troy—that is the primary motivation of the *Iliad*—could be understood as the just retribution for Paris' crime against the same Zeus Xeínios. This thought certainly occurred to Menelaus after he killed Peisander in Book 13.⁷¹

Poseidon's selfish behaviour illustrates an important principle in the much discussed motivation of divine intervention in Homer. Apart from the *Dios Boule* in the *Iliad* and the decision to allow Odysseus' return in the *Odyssey*, the gods rarely concerned themselves with the interests of the story as a whole. Hence they intervened in the action as beings of religious belief more often than as the instruments of the poet. In some cases they actually operated as a negative force not only on moral grounds by our standards, but also for dramatic reasons. For example when Athena appeared to Achilles stopping him from killing Agamemnon, she apparently denied him the opportunity of controlling his own actions.⁷² Agamemnon, too, seems weak to us in blaming Zeus, Fate and Erinys, rather than himself, for his high handed action of taking Briseis for himself and causing Achilles' wrath.⁷³ To the Homeric audience, who did not regard Agamemnon as a contemptible coward, his excuse must have seemed legitimate; but later generations have continued to wonder whether Homer's heroes lacked the power to act independently, especially in the light of the poet's comment on another occasion that,

"always the mind of Zeus is a stronger thing than a man's mind. He terrifies even the warlike man, he takes away victory lightly, when he himself has driven a man in to battle."⁷⁴

The question of human responsibility in Homer has been the subject of debate at least since Plutarch, who contrasted the Epicurean view of human dependence on divine will with the Stoic arguments of man's free will,⁷⁵ and the discussion continues to this day.⁷⁶ In so far as

⁷¹ *Il.* 13, 623ff.

⁷² *Il.* 1, 194ff.

⁷³ *Il.* 19, 87.

⁷⁴ *Il.* 16, 688-90.

⁷⁵ Plut., *de Stoic. Repugnantíis* esp. c. 47.

⁷⁶ Contrast particularly B. Snell, who believes that Homeric man lacked the

it is a problem at all in religious terms, the difficulty may resolve itself along the somewhat sophisticated lines of argument that the deity, as for example Athena in the first episode, represented the conscience or good sense of the hero whose judgment prevented him from killing his superior king.⁷⁷ However, in these cases it is almost impossible to differentiate between divine and human purpose, so that a more plausible explanation would be that divine intervention represented the extension of the human will.⁷⁸ This would agree with the Homeric habit of explaining one and the same action in two complementary ways: once as the outcome of divine intervention and again as the result of free human action. The interaction of both forces produced what is undoubtedly the most awkward scene in the *Iliad*, and also in a way its climax, namely the death of Hector. For us Athena's blatant cheating is most difficult to justify on dramatic, moral, or any other grounds. Everyone, including Hector himself, knew Achilles' invincibility, in fact Hector's courage as an epic hero precisely resided in his resolution to face Achilles in combat though his life was already forfeit.

The scene is critical to the understanding of the complex elements of Homeric theology and deserves a closer look. The setting is familiar: at the opening of Book 22 Hector had decided, against the pleas of his parents, to remain alone outside the gates of Troy to face the raging Achilles. The circumstances, as well as Hector's arguments, recall

ability to act spontaneously, *Die Entdeckung des Geistes*³, 1955, 40; *Gesammelte Schriften*, 1966, 52; and his slightly modified view in response to Lesky's arguments, "Göttliche und Menschliche Motivation im Homerischen Epos," *Argumentationes*, Festschrift. J. König (1964), 249-255 = *Ges. Schriften* 55-61 with E. Wolff, *Gnomon* 5 (1929) 386-400 in his review of Snell, *Aischylos und das Handeln im Drama* (Philol. Suppl. 20:1 (1928)), and particularly with Lesky, who also discusses the secondary literature up to 1960, in "Göttliche und Menschliche Motivation im Homerischen Epos," *Sitzb. Heidelberg* 1961 (4). For a review of the modern arguments see also Heubeck, *Hom. Frage*, 189ff., who is on Lesky's side.

⁷⁷ Cf. F. Robert, *Homère*, Paris 1950, 7f. E. R. Dodds' view is similar. He postulates that in this and other incidents of this kind the highly personal divine intervention represented a poetic way of expressing a psychological event in the hero's mind, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley 1963, 14. It seems more difficult, however, to agree with his extreme proposal, *ibid.*, that the "divine machinery" developed out of this kind of psychological experience.

⁷⁸ Cf. H. Gundert, "Charakter und Schicksal homerischer Helden," *Njb.* 3 (1940) 225-237.

those of Agenor at the close of the previous Book. Their reasoning moved entirely on a human level, although, as prominent Trojan heroes, they could count on the support of Apollo. However, as the story of Hector's destruction unfolds a secondary divine level is introduced as a motivating force. Signposts in the narrative and speeches, which on their own could still be explained as meaningless poetic devices or mere "Redensarten," as Nilsson puts it, assume a deeper religious significance in the context of this passage. So references to Hector's fate by the poet and by Hector himself,⁷⁹ like Apollo's support of Hector by lending him strength and speed to keep running from Achilles,⁸⁰ and the latter's threat that "Athena will soon kill you by my spear,"⁸¹ might have been commonplace *façons de parler* and did not necessarily directly involve the gods in the conflict. Each hero naturally boasted that *his* god was on the right side and would make *him* win. But the gods were watching the race and Zeus, who considered prolonging Hector's life, as once before he had hoped to protect his son Sarpedon, quickly yielded to the argument that mortal man should not be released from his fate of death.⁸² Zeus took up his golden scales and weighed the *keres* of death of Hector and Achilles. The heavier one of Hector sank to the ground.⁸³

Two or three points are of vital concern here. Firstly the tenor of the passage suggests that the audience knew that Hector must succumb. The poet twice stated unambiguously that Achilles was the better man.⁸⁴ Hector fled in blind terror before the stronger man. Perhaps he also realised that his predestined time had come to pay atonement to Achilles as the dying Patroclus had prophesied.⁸⁵ Certainly Achilles was aware of his moral and physical superiority. He prevented his people from intervening lest he should lose any part of his glory for the killing of Hector.⁸⁶ The picture is one of the hunter sure of his prey.

⁷⁹ *Il.* 22, 5; 280.

⁸⁰ 203f.

⁸¹ 270f.

⁸² 180.

⁸³ 212f.

⁸⁴ 158; 202.

⁸⁵ *Il.* 16, 853f.

⁸⁶ 22, 206f.

Secondly, though the outcome of the duel was never in doubt,⁸⁷ the contest had yet to be formally decided on the divine level by the symbolic yet ancient image of Zeus' scales.⁸⁸ At this moment the doomed hero was deserted by Apollo releasing his divine antagonist Athena who now brought the contest to a swift end. Athena's intervention then represented the numinous force validating what had already been determined on purely physical grounds.⁸⁹ But the story was of course worked out in the usual Homeric terms of the humanised figure of Athena quite needlessly coming to the aid of her favourite. Hence the manner in which she accomplished her purpose, although the means should be unimportant in the case of a religious power impersonally working its will, seems repulsive and dramatically unacceptable when viewed in human terms, as the poet did.

The third point finally is that this paradoxical situation of a deceitful goddess helping the stronger hero arose from the fact that the poet willingly or unwillingly interrelated the not entirely compatible human and divine levels of operation. The human level meant the plot, and Hector's death was necessary at this stage of the plot having been foreshadowed in the chain of events⁹⁰ which began with the killing of Patroclus and ultimately pointed forward to Achilles' own end as predicted by Hector.⁹¹ The divine level or motivation of these happenings, however, turned out to be a somewhat unbalanced presentation of old religious forces in the dress of Homeric Olympians.

Hector incidentally became fully aware of his destiny at the moment when "Deiphobus" deserted him.⁹² At this point he transcended the stereotype qualities of the typical epic hero and by his decision to fight on despite certain death, he anticipated the tragic power of the major figures in Aeschylean tragedy. But that is another story.⁹³

The rough joins in the treatment of the different religious elements at work in this episode are useful indications that the Homeric poets

⁸⁷ Hence the question whether Zeus or Fate controlled Hector's destiny becomes unimportant, cf. my *Death, Fate and the Gods*, corr. repr. London 1967, 296.

⁸⁸ *R.M.* 107 (1964) 97-125.

⁸⁹ Compare M. M. Willcock's view that Athena's help was that of the goddess helping the victor, *B.I.C.S.* 17 (1970) 2; 7.

⁹⁰ *Il.* 16, 852ff.

⁹¹ *Il.* 22, 358ff.

⁹² *Il.* 22, 296.

⁹³ *Il.* 22, 303ff. Cf. A. Lesky, *Hist. of Greek Lit.* 2 32.

were active theological innovators. Over the extended period of its composition, which was essentially complete in the archaic age, Homeric epic in fact constituted one of the two major forces of religious change in the Greek world. The other was the important and generally shared social event of synoecism which brought many localised community gods to the acropolis of each of the city-states. Otherwise only few foreign elements seriously interfered with the transmission of religious beliefs from prehistoric times. During the rigours of the Dark Age in Greece the names and cults of clan and community deities were preserved by individual surviving communities, whether they stayed in the old country or joined the eastward stream of migrants across the Aegean. Homeric epic was of course bound to work with the no longer localised group of gods of the *Polis* who kept their names but not always the same functions.

Community gods tended to become more general forces. Athena and Apollo for example, though also retaining their original characteristics as guardians of their community, grew into more universal divine figures. The same was true of others like Hera and Artemis. Poseidon from the community god of Pylos changed into the Earth-shaker and the universal god of the sea. However, he could also be symbolic of the sea itself or even a storm at sea. This development was a new step in Greek religion: gods not only governed elemental powers of nature but became identified with them. Hephaestus after being the age-old protector of his community of copper workers lent his name to the element of fire, as in his battle with Xanthus, who himself vacillated between river-god and anthropomorphic figure. The formerly mighty Aphrodite could from the time of Homeric epic sometimes be reduced to a word for Love. Demeter, too, gradually declined to a symbol for grain or bread.⁹⁴ The poets in their religious fervour added new personifications to the ranks of old gods. Ares for example, whose cultic past was obscure to say the least, merely personified War. Helios, the Sun, too, was a new creation in the Greek pantheon. But all these figures, which had been welded into the family of Olympians, either never lost or were newly endowed with their humanised mythological character into which they could change at will with Protean speed. Aphrodite was Love or goddess, Hephaestus Fire or humble limping

⁹⁴ *Il.* 13, 322; 21, 76.

god of the smithy, and Zephyrus could either be the west-wind or a god courteously rising for Iris.⁹⁵

For all its contradictions there is some discernible order in Homeric theology, and it is possible, without forcing the evidence, to classify the epic gods into fairly loose categories. One might isolate three general groups of gods of which the first two are made up of figures of traditional cult whose origins were similar as nature and community gods. The third class consists of epic inventions which had been added to the other beings on Olympus. The first of these groups is headed by Zeus and made up of his colleagues of first rank, so to speak, namely Hera, Athena, Apollo, Artemis and Poseidon. The second comprises figures of lesser stature for reasons which appear to be unconnected with the past history of their importance in cult. They are Hephaestus, Aphrodite, Dionysus, Demeter and Hermes.⁹⁶ Finally the new gods belonged to the last class: they were still of little consequence as religious forces but, with the *imprimatur* of Homeric epic, they were destined to develop into significant figures of cult receiving worship and respect. They are the War-god Ares, Hestia, the personification of the Hearth, Hades, god of the underworld, whose name is etymologically transparent, and of course Helios, the Sun.

All these gods, with the exception of Dionysus, who existed in Homer solely as an echo of his past myths, performed their now specialised functions which they jealously guarded. Poseidon for example was quick to rebuke Zeus for interfering in an area which should have been out of his control in the division of the world.⁹⁷ Though still visibly part of a tradition which had endured from the Bronze Age, Homer's gods created a new mythology of their own which, together with their functions, their close family relationship, and their increasing preference for working from afar, gave them their new form.

The remoteness of these major gods strangely contrasts with their former custom of appearing directly to their worshippers. Many religious scenes in Minoan and Mycenaean art show a divine epiphany in the sky or at a place of cult. Sometimes an entire crowd expectantly

⁹⁵ *Il.* 23, 203.

⁹⁶ Omitted from this list are figures of no consequence at any stage of the poems, or whose origins are obscure such as Leto, Dione, Iris, Thetis.

⁹⁷ *Il.* 15, 191ff.

seems to await the divine arrival at a festival. Old invocatory titles like King, Queen or Lady—*Anax*, *Anassa* and *Potnia*—did survive in Homer and later but no longer with the same significance.⁹⁸ Perhaps Athena's deep concern for Odysseus recalled this special relationship between the king and the palace goddess. Once too when the priestess Thano presented the new *peplos* to Athena on the Trojan citadel, the scene suggests that the goddess herself rather than her mere image received the gift.⁹⁹ These few religious anachronisms apart, however, the distance grew between man and Olympian whose anthropomorphic nature also began to lose its clear outline.

Another casualty from the past was the mysterious bond between the animal world and the gods who could be imagined to appear in zoomorphic as well as human shape. The religious function of the bull, which had been central to older Aegean cult, the snake, ram, goat, horse, and other creatures, which still retained a hold on Greek popular imagination in many localised historic cults, had plainly vanished from epic. At best a few jejune memories managed to keep alive here and there in the form of puzzling epithets like cow-eyed Hera or gray-eyed Athena,¹⁰⁰ or the faintly embarrassing story of Achilles' talking horse Xanthus,¹⁰¹ but that was all. The same applies to the half-dozen instances in Homer when a god was imagined as a bird or compared to one.¹⁰² No doubt the image recalled the old Minoan belief in bird epiphanies,¹⁰³ but the poet's overriding motive in these particular scenes was to suggest the suddenness of a bird's appearance, his speed, even his power and nobility. Hence the six episodes were primarily secular poetic devices which retained little religious significance,¹⁰⁴

⁹⁸ Their use had become secularised. B. Hemberg, *Anax, Anassa und Anakes*, Uppsala 1955.

⁹⁹ *Il.* 6, 311. Cf. E. Vermeule, *Götterkult*, Göttingen 1974, 121.

¹⁰⁰ According to Hoekstra's thesis of "formulaic evolution" in Homer — A. Hoekstra, *Homeric Modifications of Formulaic Prototypes*, Amsterdam 1965; *Sub-Epic Stage of Formulaic Tradition*, Amsterdam 1969 — the general phrase θεᾶ λευκώλενος "Ἥρη tended to displace the no longer understood βοῶπις πότνια "Ἥρη Cf. J. B. Hainsworth, "Good and Bad Formulae," in *Homer. Tradition and Invention*, B. C. Fenik (ed.), Leiden 1978, 45.

¹⁰¹ *Il.* 19, 404ff. See *Acta Classica* 7 (1964) 9-24.

¹⁰² *Od.* 1, 320 (bird); 3, 372 (sea eagle); 5, 353 (sea-bird); 22, 240 (swallow); *Il.* 5, 778f.; *Il.* 7, 59 (vultures).

¹⁰³ Nilsson, *M.M.R.* 2, 330ff.; *Gesch.* I, 290ff.; F. Matz, *Göttererscheinung und Kultbild im minoischen Kreta*, Wiesbaden 1958, *passim*; Dietrich, *Origins* 171.

¹⁰⁴ This is the persuasive view of F. Dirlmeier, *Die Vogelgestalt homerischer*

including the amusing incident when Hera and Athena in their eagerness to support the Greeks hurry along with the trembling walk of a pair of pigeons.¹⁰⁵ In Homer an animal or bird may have been subject to divine command but was never conceived of as divine itself. The eagle carried or conveyed an omen of Zeus but did not represent him.

Certainly much of Homeric innovation strikes one as a reduction to purely human terms of inherited religious concepts and practices with the overall effect of imparting a somewhat prosaic aspect to the emerging religion. Rationalism may be an acceptable term for describing this process. But the rational elements in Homeric epic have been exaggerated, as Nilsson seems to have done,¹⁰⁶ because reason can be far removed from divine motivation and action. In fact only when the gods individually helped or obstructed in what men were doing could they be said to have acted on rational, however shabby, grounds. Accordingly realistic self-interest more accurately defines the action of the Olympians of all three of our groups. But this was only one narrow aspect of their operation which manifested itself on a variety of levels of which theologically the most progressive and indeed influential on later thought was the emergence from group One of universal divine figures or powers that ultimately became representative of the new state cult in the Greek cities. There is no doubt that the elevation of Zeus the Weather-god to the high moral rank, which he was to attain in Hesiod and Aeschylus, had begun in Homeric epic. Between these two extremes divine force made itself felt in quite different ways in Homer, notably in the form of personified elemental powers of nature like a storm, flood or fire, or again as the motivation or expression of human will. The latter may either be seen from the point of view of the poet: Athena prevented Achilles from killing his superior king, or more generally through the eyes of the heroic

Götter, Sitzber. Heidelberg, 1967, 2; cf. Heubeck, *Hom. Frage* 187f. Dirlmeier's "rational" explanation has recently been criticised as too one-sided by Bannert who feels that, possibly apart from *Il.* 5, 778f., these passages still suggested the working of a numinous power behind the obvious metaphor of speed and suddenness, (H. Bannert, "Zur Vogelgestalt der Götter bei Homer," *Wiener Studien* N.F. 12 (1978) 29-42). It is certainly worth restating the religious background of this concept whose rationalisation, however, in the hands of the Homeric poets seems evident.

¹⁰⁵ *Il.* 5, 778f.

¹⁰⁶ *Gesch.* 3 I, 368ff. Contrast the arguments of E. Ehnmark, *Anthropomorphism and Miracle*, Uppsala univ. årsskrift 1939: 12, 37ff.; 68.

character who held the gods accountable for his actions. In both cases, however, divine and human will appeared to coincide: man ultimately made his own decisions as a free agent.¹⁰⁷

Archaic and classical Greek art was of course pervaded by Homeric mythology. It also reflected the impact on society of the Homeric concept of the gods. The growth of epic influence on the minds of all citizens is particularly evident in the fully documented history of Attic vase painting in black and red figure. In the earlier black-figure style already gods had forgotten their past custom of attending ceremonies when invoked by their worshippers. Only rarely was Athena shown as coming to her festivals in her city.¹⁰⁸ Also in the earlier scenes gods, specially Athena of course, were not infrequently figured as patrons of individual heroes, a function which was common in older religious tradition.¹⁰⁹ However, the concept of the gods as members of one Olympian family was still new in Greek art in the first part of the sixth century B.C. Significantly the divine family became better known after the reorganization of the Panathenaic Festival in 566 B.C., when Homeric recitals were probably introduced,¹¹⁰ and continued to be painted together in the later red-figure style.¹¹¹ But after 500 B.C. the Olympians generally appeared more in isolation, remote and separated from their protégés.¹¹²

Is it really possible to formulate any kind of coherent theology from the manifold workings of Homer's gods and of his complex beliefs ranging from base superstition to the first concepts of morality and justice in religion? Probably not. But some observations of a few general principles of Homeric religion are nevertheless valid and useful. Firstly this very range and mass of sometimes conflicting

¹⁰⁷ See above and Gundert, *Njb* 3 (1940) 237: "So bewirken die Fügungen der Götter nichts anderes, als was diese Menschen aus sich selbst leisten und zu leisten vermögen, und die Frage, ob sie 'gebunden' seien oder 'frei,' trifft sie darum nicht."

¹⁰⁸ E.g. at a sacrificial scene on a belly amphora by the Berlin painter, *Berlin Staatliche Museen* 1686, J. D. Beazley, *Attic Black-figure Vase-painters*, 1956, 296; cf. J. Boardman, *Athenian Black Figure Vases*, London 1974, fig. 135; p. 213. Later epiphanies of Dionysus among women revellers were probably intended as more symbolic representations of wine.

¹⁰⁹ Boardman, *Bl. Fig. Vas.* 216; 219.

¹¹⁰ Boardman, *Bl. Fig. V.* 220.

¹¹¹ Boardman, *Athenian Red Figure Vases. The Archaic Period*, London 1975, 226.

¹¹² Boardman, *R.F.V.* 224.

traditions arose from Homer's amazingly independent way of treating past gods, their functions and cult. Yet these epic gods were not merely literary figures of myth but divine powers which inspired faith. Finally the third and most important lesson to be learnt from the evidence is that the Homeric poets completely altered the course of Greek religion from its Aegean past, for we must never forget that Homeric religion and the religion of the Polis were one and the same thing.¹¹³

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¹¹³ Cf. H. Schrader, *Menschen und Götter Homers*, 1952, 8, who rightly denies that, "Dichtung und Religion einander notwendig entgegengesetzt sein müssten."

TRIFUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS IN THE MYTHOLOGY OF
THE HINDU *TRIMŪRTI* *

G. M. BAILEY

It is no exaggeration to suggest that the bulk of the mythology found in the Hindu epics and Purāṇas is about Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti, Brahmā and the group of gods closely associated with them. The divinities of the earliest strata of Vedic literature—Indra, the so-called group of thirty-three gods and the various groups of demons—play a role in many of these myths, but they do not dominate, as they did in Vedic mythology. This is not to say that the main themes of Vedic mythology or the images occurring in it are necessarily absent from myths which occur in post-Vedic literature. Indeed, the richness and variety of epic and Purāṇic mythology is in part a result of the transformation of Vedic images and themes under the influence of socio-religious values not current during the early Vedic period (till about 800 BC), or, if current, not represented in the extant literature. Of these values, the most important have been those associated with the rise of asceticism as a creative and abiding force within Indian religions and *bhakti*.

The *trimūrti* of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva first appear in Indian literature in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* where they are correlated with the three *guṇas*.¹ They are not yet depicted as creator, preserver and destroyer of the triple world (*triloka*) as they are so frequently in the Purāṇas. Significantly, they are only mentioned in this capacity once in the *Mbh.*, and there, in a passage regarded by the editors of the critical edition to be an interpolation.² In the *Mbh.* Brahmā and Viṣṇu

* The following abbreviations have been used throughout this article. *BhP.* — *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*; *H.* — *Harivaṃśa*; *Mbh.* — *Mahābhārata*; *MkP.* — *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*; *Śp.* — *Śiva Purāṇa*; *VāmP.* — *Vāmana Purāṇa*.

¹ *Maitrī Upaniṣad*, 5, 2. These gods do not constitute the only, or indeed, the earliest triad in Indian literature. Lists of others are given by J. Gonda, "The Hindu Trinity," *Anthropos*, 63 (1968), pp. 215-19.

² *Mbh.* 3, App. 1, No. 27, lines 35-36. Referring to Viṣṇu this passage says: *śṛjate brahmamūrtistu rakṣate pauruṣī tanuḥ raudrābhāvena śamayettisro 'vasthāḥ prajāpateḥ*.

are frequently depicted as creator and preserver respectively, sometimes as both. Śiva, too, is implicitly present as destroyer in several myths, but he is not so strikingly presented in this role as the other two are in their specific roles.³ Thus, their frequent appearance as a collective in the cosmogonic sections of the Purāṇas would seem to be a logical development from their roles in the *Mbh.*

The Purāṇic portrayal of the *trimūrti* is not just in terms of their cosmogonic roles. They are included as expressions of *Aum*, along with other triads such as the three fires, and three Vedas and the three worlds, or, the three gods are correlated with the Vedas; Brahmā is the *Ṛg.*, Viṣṇu the *Yajus* and Śiva the *Sāma*.⁴ Like other triads in Indian literature, the *trimūrti* could be used as an expression of any other triad or important concept.⁵

At the level of narrative Indian mythology consists largely of interactions between divine figures and themes such as the conflict between the gods and demons, Agni's withdrawal of his flame, the incest of the creator with his daughter and many others. Beneath this grouping of interactions which make up the narratives lie value systems and ideologies which are expressed through and shape the narratives.⁶ These value systems and ideologies occur explicitly and implicitly in the epics and Purāṇas and provide an overarching framework within which the exploits of the gods, especially the *trimūrti*, can be placed. The most important value systems relevant to the mythology of the *trimūrti* are those designated by the terms *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* and the set of values associated with *bhakti*.⁷ Also of importance is the tripartite

³ Examples of this are the events involved in the destruction of Dakṣa's sacrifice, the disastrous dice game between Yudhiṣṭhira and Duryodhana which leads to so much carnage, and the episode of Aśvatthāman's night raid against the Pāṇḍava's camp. Each of these has been studied from the perspective of Śiva's destructive role by A. Hiltebeitel, *The Ritual of Battle: Krishna in the Mahābhārata*, (Ithaca and London, 1976), chs 4 and 12.

⁴ *Mkp.* 42, 10; 102, 19.

⁵ See *Agni Purāṇa*, 92, 41-5; *Mkp.* 88, 12-18.

⁶ I do not intend to concern myself here with the distinction between "value system" and "ideology." I have used the term "value system" in a sense akin to the meaning of "ideology" as an abstract system of ideas embodying a distinct vision of the world.

⁷ The exact nature of the set of values associated with *bhakti*, or, indeed, even whether such a set of values even exists, remains unclear. However, there is a whole series of myths in the Purāṇas (*KP.* 1, 9, 5-87; *SP.* 1, 6-8; 3, 8ff.; *Matsya Purāṇa*, 183, 81ff.; *VāmP.* 2, 31, 4-104) where the members of the *trimūrti* act

ideology, shown by Dumézil to be so prominent an influence in most branches of Indo-European mythology. My aim in this paper is restricted to determining whether the last of these, the tripartite ideology, has influenced the mythology of the gods of the *trimūrti*. Do each of the three gods represent one of the functions which go to make up the tri-functional ideology? Subsequent studies will be devoted to the influence of the other sets of values on the mythology of these gods.⁸

In the first volume of *Mythe et Épopée* Dumézil has demonstrated convincingly that the tri-functional ideology has shaped the personalities of the main participants in the great battle described in the *Mbh*.⁹ There his attention was focussed on the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas inasmuch as they are portions (*aṁśa*) of gods and demons reborn on earth. For the purpose of this paper I shall regard the stories and legends recounting the battle and the events leading up to it as the first rank of the mythology of the *Mbh*. The myths of the gods and other divine figures, occurring primarily in the didactic sections of the epic and duplicated in the Purāṇas, are regarded as the second rank of this mythology.¹⁰ Dumézil's analysis has been applied mostly to the first

out roles paradigmatic of the *bhakta* and the god to which he is devoted. Terms such as *moha*, *māyā*, *prasāda*, *daivam caksus*, *paramam bhāvam* and *śaranm* recur constantly in these myths and to a marked extent structure the activities of the gods who appear in them. They could be said to comprise the basis of a vocabulary of *bhakti*.

⁸ Important work on the influence of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* on the mythology of the *trimūrti* has been done by M. Biarreau in the course of her continuing study of Hindu mythology. See her, "Études de mythologie hindoue: Cosmogonies purāniques," pts 1, 2 and 3, *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, LIV, LV, LVII (1968, 69, 71).

⁹ G. Dumézil, *Mythe et Épopée* (4 vols, Paris, 1968-), vol. 1, pp. 33-257. For the classic exposition of the tripartite ideology see his *L'idéologie tripartite des Indo-européens* (Brussels, 1958).

¹⁰ Though this may seem an arbitrary distinction, a similar division has been suggested by Hildebeitel. For him epic is a category *sui generis* and it should be regarded as legend rather than as myth. He sees the distinction between legend and myth in terms of the contents of the two genres. Myth consists of stories which take place in the fullest expanses of time and space. They deal with cosmogony and cosmology and have gods as their principal characters. Legends consist of stories which take place at a specific time and on a specific terrain. They deal with the origin, nature, and destiny of man and their most prominent characters are heroes (see Hildebeitel, *op. cit.*, p. 32). This distinction conforms well to the contents of the *Mbh*. The stories of the Pāṇḍavas fit the category of

rank mythology. He has only turned to second rank mythology when it facilitates a better understanding of first rank mythology. He has not made an extensive study of second rank mythology nor has he pursued his researches into the Purāṇas, the main sources of this mythology.

About the possible influence of the tripartite ideology on the mythology of the gods of the *trimūrti* Dumézil has said little and what he has said is generally evasive in terms of categorizing each of the gods into a specific functional level. In the context of the legends of Śiśupāla and Jarāsaṁdha, he has dealt with two of the gods of the *trimūrti*, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Commenting about the opposition between these two gods in Hinduism, he touches upon their convergence with the three functions:

It is only Hinduism which will develop their opposition in so far as they are destroyer and saviour in the periodic crises of the world. In any case, at no time are they defined by a relatedness to two different levels of the trifunctional structures: the vedic Viṣṇu is above all an associate of Indra on the second level and Rudra's multiform activity is not able to be expressed within the framework of this structure. As healer, as an expert in herbs, he operates on the third level, as well as on the second level when he is an archer or in his plurality of Rudrāḥ, yet nothing seems to orientate him towards the sovereign level.¹¹

Even on the basis of their appearances in the Vedas he is sceptical of their conformity to any one of the functions, implying as in the above statement, that they range across all three functions:

If the vedic Viṣṇu belongs preferentially to the second function because he yields his resources to Indra with such services as his steps, he goes beyond it in that he serves Manu as well, the sacrificer and the gods in general. Rudra, in the hymns and later, evades still more completely every attempt at fixation in the structure of the three functions.¹²

On this note Dumézil leaves the problem. He does not extend his researches into the Purāṇas where these two gods and Brahmā are grouped into a formal synthesis certainly not present (but perhaps implied) in pre-Purāṇic literature. It is in these texts with their wealth

legends whereas those of the gods are better placed in the category of myth. Hildebeitel makes no use of categories such as first and second rank mythologies, but he does, however, see a distinction between the nature of the stories and legends about the Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas and the myths about the gods.

¹¹ G. Dumézil, *Mythe et Épopée*, vol. 2, p. 82 (my translation).

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 87 (my translation).

of mythological material that one would expect to find convergences between the members of the *trimūrti* and trifunctional categorization if they exist at all.

Already, in 1897, de Gubernatis, attempting to account for Indra's eclipse in popularity in the Gangetic basin by Brahṁā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, had said of these gods:

Brahṁā contents himself with his spiritual force; Viṣṇu with his heroic force and Śiva with his fecundatory power and his wealth. Moreover, each of the three corresponds to a class and a social caste: the sage represented by Brahṁā, the strong man represented by Viṣṇu, the rich man represented by Śiva.¹³

Not only has he pre-empted the application of the trifunctional analysis to Hindu mythology, he has also recognized it in the *trimūrti* itself. But is his claim valid? Do the texts bear him out, especially since no evidence was provided by him in support of the statement?

Some texts do support the claim of de Gubernatis. In a passage of the *Kathāsaritsāgara* there is a description of the gods of the *trimūrti* as they go to witness a battle:

And Śaṅkara [Śiva], the Lord of everything, came there, accompanied by Pārvatī and followed by the gods, the inferior deities (*gaṇas*), the spirits and the mothers. And the illustrious Brahṁā came, along with Sāvitrī and the rest, the personified Vedas, the appendices, the *śāstras* and the great sages. And Hari [Viṣṇu], a warrior armed with a discus, whose chariot is the king of the birds, came, together with his wives led by *Lakṣmī* (fortune), *Kīrti* (fame) and *Jayā* (victory).¹⁴

The accompanists of each of the three gods reflect the personality and general sphere of activity of that god. Moreover, there is a striking correspondence between each group of accompanists and one of the three functions. Brahṁā and his accompanists are strongly representative of the first function—priesthood, religion and the sovereign aspect of kingship.¹⁵ The Vedas and the *śāstras* are the source of religious knowledge, and Sāvitrī, Brahṁā's wife, is the name given to the verse

¹³ A. de Gubernatis, "Brahman et Savitrī, ou L'Origine de la Prière," *Actes du Onzième Congrès International d'Orientalistes* (Paris, 1897), p. 14 (my translation).

¹⁴ *Kathāsaritsāgara*, 8, 47, 46-48.

¹⁵ For definitions of each of the functions see Dumézil, *L'idéologie tripartite...*, p. 19.

(*RV.* 3, 62, 10) taught to all male members of the three twice-born *varṇas* immediately after the *upanāyana*. It is the symbol of the knowledge they will learn. Finally, the great sages, symbolic of religious learning and wisdom, would seem to explicitly characterize the first function.

Viṣṇu's accompanists indicate that he represents the second function—the dynamic aspect of kingship and martial force. His discus and chariot are signs of his martial character just as his three consorts are personifications of characteristics which kings were believed to possess.¹⁶ Śiva conforms least of the three gods to any one function, but there are indications that if he conforms to any of them, it is to the third function.¹⁷ Little can be said about the *gaṇas*, *bhūtas* and *devatās*, for they are just designations of general classes of divine beings. Perhaps the first two represent Śiva in his ferocious aspect. It is the mothers, however, which relate Śiva to the third function, because it is likely that they represent fertility, one of the most important third function characteristics.

Another passage where the three gods are categorized tri-functionally occurs in one version of the myth where Pṛthu is consecrated king.¹⁸ The gifts given to him by the three gods at his consecration are tri-functional. Brahmā gave him an armour of Vedic incantations (*brahmamayaṃ varma*) and his wife gave him a necklace. Viṣṇu gave him the *sudarśana* discus and Lakṣmī, an unimpeded *śrī*. Rudra gave him a sword engraved with ten moon like marks (*daśacandramasim*) and his consort, Ambikā, a sword with one hundred moon like marks. Each of the presents given by the gods is a weapon, which is quite appropriate

¹⁶ On these three characteristics of kings see J. Gonda, *Ancient Indian Kingship From the Religious Point of View* (Leiden, 1969), pp. 45ff.; Hiltebeitel, *op. cit.*, ch. 4.

¹⁷ Since the characteristics of the third function do not form a coherent whole like those of the first and second functions I give here Dumézil's definition of it. 'It is less easy to circumscribe in a few words the essence of the third function which covers numerous areas, among which some obvious links appear, but whose unity does not comprise a distinct central point. Certainly fecundity, human, animal and vegetable, but in time nourishment and wealth, well-being and peace—along with the pleasures and advantages of peace—and often sensual pleasure, beauty and also, the important notion of the 'great number,' applicable not only to wealth (abundance), but also to men who comprise the social body (mass) [are the main characteristics of the third function]. See Dumézil, *L'idéologie tripartite...*, p. 19 (my translation).

¹⁸ *BhP.* 4, 15, 16-17.

since the recipient is a king and warrior. Brahmā's gift corresponds to spiritual force, Viṣṇu's to physical force and Śiva's, again the most problematic, to fertility, the moon being a ubiquitous symbol of fertility.¹⁹

Yet another case of the tri-functionality appears in a version of the *liṅgodbhava* myth.²⁰ In this version of the myth Brahmā, described as the best knower of the Vedas (*brahmadevidvānvaraḥ*), is portrayed going up to Viṣṇu who was lying on his snake couch surrounded by servants and his great power (*parayā*) personified as a female. They begin to fight amongst themselves over which one is superior to the other. Eventually Śiva appears in the form of a fiery *liṅgam*, whereby he proves his superiority over the other two gods because neither of them is able to find a beginning or an end to the *liṅgam*. The *liṅgam* would appear to represent fertility, Viṣṇu's *parābhūti* represents kingship and Brahmā's knowledge of the Vedas represents priesthood and religion.

Besides these few passages there is another reason for suggesting that the gods of the *trimūrti* were categorized in terms of the tri-functional ideology. Their respective *vāhanas* conform well to the tri-functional ideology. Brahmā's swan (*haṁsa*) is well known as a symbol of wisdom.²¹ Viṣṇu's mount, Garuḍa, king of the birds, is frequently portrayed as very warlike, destroying monsters, snakes and the like.²² Śiva's mount, Nandin the bull, is of course a universal symbol of male fertility.

Having cited several passages where the *trimūrti* as a group conform to the three functions it might now be asked if such conformity is merely fortitious? This query is especially pertinent if it is borne in mind that in other places where the three gods are grouped together,

¹⁹ Many instances of the moon's connections with fertility are given by M. Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (London and New York, 1958), pp. 161-67. In India itself, Soma, the moon, is well known as the Lord of plants. About the moon Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, (Reprint, Delhi, 1975; Strassburg, 1915), p. 90, says, "The Moon is lord of lotuses, kumudanātha, and his crescent, the boat (*uḍupa*), is the type of female loveliness, as the full moon ... is the image of a beauty." Loveliness and beauty are third function characteristics.

²⁰ *SP*. 1, 1, 6, 1-2, and for the rest of the myth, 1, 1, 6-8. The version of this myth occurring at *KP*. 1, 25, 67-110, can also be interpreted tri-functionally.

²¹ J. Vogel, *The Goose in Indian Art and Literature* (Leiden, 1962). In *SP* 1, 2, 7, 54 and 1, 2, 15, 11, the goose is connected with knowledge and wisdom.

²² For details see E. W. Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

there is no hint of a convergence with the three functions. In addition, even if the convergences are not a product of chance, do the main features of the mythology of each god point to that god being individually representative of one of the three functions much more than the other two? Would it have originally been logical to have grouped them into a triad just on the basis of their connections with the three functions? I shall attempt to show that all these questions can be answered positively, but with the one proviso that the tripartite ideology has not been the only factor instrumental in shaping the mythology of these gods.

In some respects Brahmā's personality is the least ambiguous of the three gods. He reflects the characteristics of the first function. This is because he is fundamentally concerned with sacred knowledge and its dissemination, with religion, with the priesthood and with the static aspect of the sovereign power—creation and preservation of *dharma*. At the time of creation he creates and disseminates the Vedas to humans.²³ His competence in knowledge of them is conveyed in some of his epithets such as *vedavaktā*, "reciter of the Vedas" and *brahmadevidvānvarah*, "best knower of the Vedas."²⁴ Equally important as this is the view that his four heads may each represent one of the Vedas and the fact that he was believed to be the Vedas themselves as epithets of him such as *caturveda* and *vedamaya* indicate.²⁵ As with the Vedas, he creates *dharma* as an integral stage in the process of creation, and, during the course of the *kalpa* takes action against any being, man, god or demon, who in any way threatens its prevalence as the norm of conduct in the three worlds. One of his epithets, *dharmamaya*, is striking evidence that his essence was held to be *dharma*.²⁶

There is also ample evidence in the texts of his close relationship with the *brāhmaṇa*, whose obligatory duties are most assimilable to the first function. Brahmā is occasionally depicted in the texts as a *brāhmaṇa* and is said to be affectionate towards *brāhmanas* (*brāhmanavatsala*).²⁷ In the words of Biarreau, he is

²³ *H.* 1, 35; *SP.* 5, 29, 21; *Manu Smṛti*, 1, 23; *Mbh.* 12, 160, 21.

²⁴ *SP.* 1, 1, 6, 2, 2, 10, 30; 2, 3, 31, 20; *Mbh.* 5, 108, 10.

²⁵ *Mbh.* 3, 194, 12; 12, 175, 25. Cf. *KP.* 1, 2, 26.

²⁶ *Mbh.* 12, 175, 34. Cf. *SP.* 2, 3, 43, 51.

²⁷ *Rāmāyana* (Cr. ed.), 7, 5, 14; *Mahāvastu*, Trans. J. Jones (3 vols, London, 1949-56), vol. 3, p. 218; *SP.* 2, 4, 15, 30. In Gandhara art and the Pali Canon

the mythical personification of *brahma* as a power proper to the *brāhmaṇas* (and distinct from the *kṣatra* of the *kṣatriyas*) and the ultimate foundation of the orthodox society.²⁸

It is not going too far to say that the masculine *Brahmā* personifies the entire range of meanings implied by the word neuter *brahma*, all of which have spiritual connotations in accordance with the basic characteristics of the first function.

Second function status can be attributed to *Viṣṇu* because his roles in mythology epitomize the dynamic aspects of kingship such as upholding power and dharmic order through physical force. In the *Ṛg Veda* *Viṣṇu* helps *Indra* fight *Vṛtra*, but the situation is transformed in the epics as Gonda has noted:

In the epic period the relations between these two gods undergo a radical change ... *Viṣṇu* becomes the typical fighter for the gods. He enters *Indra*'s *vajra* or gives him his *tejas* (energy) and strength (*balam*).²⁹

His strength and courage are often stressed in the texts. Adjectives used of him such as *śreṣṭhahṛaharatām*, "best of the strikers," *satya-parākrama*, "truly bold," and *balavatām varah*, "best of the strong," are typical of this stress.³⁰ His warriorhood is apparent in the figures of some of his *avatāras*. The occasion when as *Narasimha* he kills the demon *Hiranyakāśipu* is especially noticeable for its brutality:

Then he [*Hiranyakāśipu*] was seized by that king of beasts whose arms were as solid as mountains. Having placed him on his knees he tore his chest with blade-like nails, piercing that *Dānava*'s mortal parts. After his blood had been mixed on his lotus heart by those nails which were weapons he departed from life in an instant. But though he was dead and had become still as a piece of wood he [*Narashimha*] pulverized every limb of his body.³¹

Passages like this bring out *Viṣṇu*'s martial characteristics.

Brahmā and *Indra* are paired functionally as *brāhmaṇa* and *kṣatriya* respectively. For details see E. Lamotte, *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien: Des Origines à L'Ère Śaka* (Louvain, 1958), p. 764. Even the implements which he holds in sculptures are those of the *brāhmaṇa*. As W. Kirfel, *Symbolik Des Hinduismus und Des Jainismus* (Stuttgart, 1959), says, "Seine attribute sind also Gegenstände, die nichts Urtümliches an sich haben, sondern Dinge, die in jeder Weise dem Beruf und der Würde eines Brahmanen entsprechen."

²⁸ Biardeau, "Études de mythologie hindoue," pt. 2, p. 77 (my translation).

²⁹ J. Gonda, *Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism* (second edition, Delhi, 1969; Utrecht, 1954), pp. 34-5.

³⁰ See respectively *Mbh.* 3, 260, 15; *H.* 38, 79; 47, 26; 61, 29; *Mbh.* 3, App. 1, No. 15, line 14; *Mbh.* 14, 43, 8; *H.* 31, 19.

³¹ *ŚP.* 2, 5, 43, 38-9. Cf. 2, 5, 42, 44-46; *H.* 36, 65-67; *BhP.* 7, 8, 24-31.

The texts also give the impression that he is a representative of the *kṣatriya varṇa*, the social class which corresponds to the second function. His warlike exploits motivated by a desire to revive *dharma* in the three worlds are, indeed, but a reflection of the earthly *kṣatriya* (and king) who is expected to forcibly uphold adherence to *dharma* in his kingdom. At least two of his avatāras, Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, are *kṣatriyas*, and another, Paraśu Rāma, though a *brāhmaṇa*, acts like a *kṣatriya*. Finally, his intimate relationship with kingship, in India a position restricted to the warrior class, is further indication of his closeness to the image of the *kṣatriya*. Numerous texts state that kings are born on earth endowed with a portion of Viṣṇu (*viṣṇoramśena*).³²

Viṣṇu's character is far too complex and multivalent just to be reduced to the second function. Many of his exploits and aspects of his personality conform to first and third function characteristics.³³ Still, the particular aspects of his mythology which have just been outlined above are central to any understanding of this god. Hence it is not unreasonable to assert that the main thrust of his mythology establishes him as a second function god.

Similarly, Śiva's mythology at first view is too extensive in terms of subject matter to be restricted to any one function. For example, when depicted in his important role as destroyer of Tripura he would seem to be enacting a second function duty. In spite of this some of the most central features of his mythology are strongly suggestive of those of a third function deity. This is so for three reasons. Firstly, the importance in the texts ascribed to his liṅgam—clearly a symbol of male procreation.

Secondly, because of his sexual relations with his own wife, Pārvatī, described so vividly in the Purāṇas. Moreover he has a reputation according to these same texts of being a seducer of other men's wives.³⁴ Of course it could be objected here that if Śiva is associated with male fertility because he is a great lover and seducer, he is just as much opposed to it in his guise of ascetic. Ascetics in India traditionally were supposed to remain chaste. Paradoxically though, *tapas*, "ascetic

³² *KP.* 1, 21, 24 and 35; *Mbh.* 12, 59, 127; Gonda, *Aspects...*, p. 165.

³³ For some examples see *ibid.*, chs 3 (Viṣṇu and fertility) and chs 9-10 (The Sacrifice).

³⁴ On this see W. D. O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva* (London, 1973), chs 6 and 7.

heat," produced as a result of severe austerities is a powerful generative and procreative force in its own right.³⁵ Its use as a bringer of rain is brought out in the myth of Ṛṣyaṣṅga, an ascetic, whose appearance in a particular kingdom after being seduced by a woman, the union of the two symbolizing fertility, prompted Indra to cause rain to fall.³⁶ Many examples could be cited of ascetics having accumulated large quantities of *tapas* and then proving sexually attractive to women.³⁷ The point of all this is that "the yogin becomes as strong and beautiful as a god, and women desire him, but he must persevere in chastity; on account of the retention of semen there will be generated an agreeable smell in the body of the yogin."³⁸ Because Śiva has traditionally been thought of as the ascetic par-excellence it does not mean that his status as a fertility god is weakened. If anything it is strengthened.

There is a third reason for seeing in Śiva a god who represents the third function. One of his most common epithets is *paśupati*, "Lord of beasts." This epithet has connotations of the *vaiśya*, whose principal duties were cattle raising, agriculture and trade. One of Śiva's predecessors, Rudra, is frequently invoked in the *Rg Veda* and other Vedic texts for the protection of animals, but this type of invocation is common to most Vedic gods. More than anything it is the fact that Rudra-Śiva is the only god of whom the epithet *paśupati* is used and this alone sets him off from other gods in relation to protection of animals. In the Purāṇas the title *paśupati* was interpreted philosophically and became the basis of the *pāśupata* doctrine. But the name still retains the implication of Rudra-Śiva as a god who protects herds of cattle and other animals.

In conclusion, there is ample justification for seeing a correspondence between the gods of the *trimūrti* and the three functions. Even so, it might be thought that the only thing achieved by this study is a cataloguing of passages relevant to the individual gods, passages which make them appear to correspond to the three functions, and omitting

³⁵ Prajāpati is often portrayed in the Brāhmaṇas creating the world through *tapas*. For references see *ibid.*, p. 41.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-51.

³⁷ See J. Gonda, "Ascetics and Courtesans", *Adyar Library Bulletin*, 25 (1961), pp. 78-102.

³⁸ M. Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (New York, 1958), p. 129, as cited in O'Flaherty, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

those which either show no such correspondences or show correspondences to another function supposedly atypical of the god. It is true that the mythology of each god of the *trimūrti* is so extensive and multivalent that each god is portrayed performing a variety of roles and passages could be found which range their mythology across all of the functions. Dumézil has suggested this. All I have tried to stress is that the central features of the mythology of each god, and their personality as expressed in the myths, categorizes that god into one function rather than another.

Although the tripartite ideology has had a discernible influence on the mythology of these gods it is certainly not the only influence or the most important one. It is vital for any understanding of their mythology to realise that it is multivalent. By this I mean that several different value systems and ideologies are present in the myths. Since one of the functions of the mythology of the epics and *purāṇas* is to express these value systems and ideologies, it is essential to be aware of them if the meaning of the myths is to be understood. In the case of the *trimūrti*, the tripartite ideology has left its imprint on the gods, but it has been only one of several influences on their mythology. The others shall be studied in subsequent articles.

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THE 'CHILD OF THE WATERS':
A REVALUATION OF VEDIC APĀṂ NAPĀT

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The Vedic god Apāṁ Napāt has been the subject of much debate among Vedic scholars, and inspired among them a wide range of interpretation. There was never, however, a firm consensus on his significance, or on the significance of his ritual, the Aponaptriyaṁ. Recently, work by Indo-Europeanists has made available new material which sheds further light on the place of Apāṁ Napāt within the larger pantheon of Vedic gods. It is the purpose of this paper to reevaluate the Apāṁ Napāt passages from the Ṛgveda in view of the recent advances made in Indo-European studies, and, more importantly, to show how a common Indo-European heritage was readapted to meet peculiarly Indian needs.

I

The problematic nature of Apāṁ Napāt is immediately evident when we review his numerous interpretations. One of the earliest analyses of Apāṁ Napāt is that of F. M. Müller, given in a lecture on Comparative Mythology in 1856. Müller believes that Apāṁ Napāt is the sun in heaven, and is called the 'child of the waters' only because he sinks into the arms of his mother, the sea, at sunset.¹

After Müller, the oldest and still most entertained belief is that Apāṁ Napāt is lighting, the flash of fire born from the rainbearing clouds. The first to hold this view is R. Roth (1855) who calls Apāṁ Napāt the "Sohn der Gewässer, heisst Agni, weil er aus den Wassern der Luft als Blitz entspringt."² Roth is followed by A.

¹ F. Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, 2nd ed., II (London: Longmans, Green, 1868), 82. Support for Müller's interpretation comes from Apāṁ Napāt's association with the sun-god Savitar, see below, and Hermann Oldenberg, 'Savitar,' *ZDMG*, LI (1897), 473-484; and 'Noch einmal der vedische Savitar,' *ZDMG*, LIX (1905), 253-264.

² Otto von Böhtlingk und Rudolph Roth, *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*, I (St. Petersburg: Buchdruckerei der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1855), 275; for a general discussion of lightning in the Ṛgveda, see H. Lommel, 'Blitz und Donner im Ṛgveda,' *Oriens*, VIII (1955), 258-283.

Ludwig (1878),³ A. Bergaigne (1878-1883),⁴ J. Darmesteter (1880, 1883),⁵ F. Spiegel (1887),⁶ and L. von Schroeder (1888, 1895, 1916).⁷ Müller apparently changes his mind over the decades, for in 1889 he follows the majority of scholars by declaring that Apām Napāt is indeed lightning, and not the setting sun.⁸ He is later supported in this by E. W. Fay (1894, 1896),⁹ who argues that Apām Napāt is just one of the many names for the Aryan god of lightning, others being Mātariśvan, Tanūnapāt, Narāsaṃsa, Poseidon, Demeter, and Apollo, and by A. A. Macdonell (1897),¹⁰ his student A. B. Keith (1925),¹¹ H. W. Magoun (1898, 1900, 1920),¹² G. Widengren (1938),¹³ A. K. Devi (1938),¹⁴ and S. A. Dange (1970).¹⁵

³ Alfred Ludwig, *Der Rigveda, oder Die Heiligen Hymnen der Brāhmana*, III (Prag: F. Tempsky, 1878), 324.

⁴ Abel Bergaigne, *La religion védique, d'après les hymnes du Rig-Véda* (Paris: F. Vieweg, 1878-1883), I, 167; II, 17ff., esp. 327; III, 45.

⁵ James Darmesteter (trans.), *The Zend-Avesta* (SBE, IV, XXIII; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1880, 1883), I, lxiii; II, 6n.

⁶ F. Spiegel, *Die Arische Periode und ihre Zustände* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Friedrich, 1887), p. 193; see also pp. 192-94.

⁷ Leopold von Schroeder, 'Apollon-Agni,' KZ, XXIX (1888), 212ff.; 'Bemerkungen zu H. Oldenbergs Religion des Veda,' WZKM, IX (1895), 225ff.; *Arische Religion*, II (Leipzig: H. Haessel, 1916), 482, 482n, 490-91.

⁸ F. Max Müller, *Natural Religion* (London: Longmans, Green, 1889), p. 500.

⁹ Edwin W. Fay, 'Some Epithets of Agni,' PAOS, Dec. 1894, clxxii; 'The Aryan God of Lightning,' AJPh, XVII.1 (1896), 1-29.

¹⁰ Arthur Anthony Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology* (Strassburg: K. J. Trübner, 1897; Varanasi, Delhi: Indological Book House, 1971), pp. 70, 92.

¹¹ Arthur Berriedale Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads* (HOS, XXXI; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1925), I, 136; see also 135-36.

¹² Herbert W. Magoun, 'Apām Napāt in the Rig-Veda,' JAOS, XIX.2 (1898), 144; see also 'The Original Hindu Triad,' JAOS, XIX.2 (1898), 146-47; 'Apām Napāt Again,' AJPh, XXI (1900), 274ff.; and 'Agni Vṛtrahan and the Avestan Verethraghna,' in *Studies in Honor of Maurice Bloomfield*, by a group of his pupils (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920), pp. 205-06.

¹³ Geo. Widengren, *Hochgottglaube im alten Iran* (Uppsala: A.-B. Lundequistska, 1938), p. 238.

¹⁴ Akshaya Kumari Devi, *The Evolution of the Rigvedic Pantheon* (Calcutta: Vijaya Krishna Brothers, 1938), pp. 88, 90, 97.

¹⁵ Sadashi A. Dange, 'The Cosmic Foetus and the Symbolism of Rain from the Rgveda,' JBomU, XXXIX (1970), 2ff. Support for the lightning interpretation can be found in a number of passages. RV.II.35.3, 4, for instance, could easily describe a thunderstorm whose rains surround flashes of brilliant lightning alive with fuelless and unkindled flames; and RV.III.9.2 could easily describe a flash of lightning consuming the trees of the forest—a flash which is suddenly here, then suddenly gone, but whose brief appearance makes a lasting impression upon the

One of the earliest to criticize the identification of Apām Napāt with lightning is H. Oldenberg (1894). Taking his cue from the early Iranian texts, Oldenberg maintains that Apām Napāt was originally a water spirit (*Wasserdämon*) whose nature, only subsequently, became contaminated with the Agnian god of fire.¹⁶ Poets found support for this linkage, he maintains, in the ancient association of plants with water: sticks made from plants born of water bring forth fire when rubbed together. L. H. Gray (1900, 1925?)¹⁷ accepts the opinion of Oldenberg, that Apām Napāt is originally and primarily a water god, and is subsequently followed by M. N. Dhalla (1914, 1938),¹⁸ K. F. Geldner (1951), who calls the Indian Apām Napāt a “Wassergott-heit,”¹⁹ R. N. Dandekar (1962),²⁰ and again S. A. Dange (1968).²¹

The most interesting of the recent interpretations of Apām Napāt is that of M. Boyce (1975).²² Agreeing with Oldenberg’s designation of Apām Napāt as a water god, Boyce maintains that in Indo-Iranian times the name Apām Napāt was a simple appellation of Varuṇa. She

worshipper. Apām Napāt is also called *vidyūtaṃ vāsānaḥ* ‘clothed in lightning’ (RV.II.35.9b), and passages which invoke him often describe his concealment amidst the waters, his swiftness, and his fieriness—all characteristics of the lightning. Furthermore, later Vedic texts preserve a tradition of priestly exegesis which interprets Apām Napāt as the god connected with lightning. See, for instance, BaudhŚS.XIII.33.

¹⁶ Hermann Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda* (Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1894), pp. 118ff.; see also N. N. Bhattacharyya, ‘Cosmogonical Speculations in Ancient India: A Comparative Study,’ *JOIB*, XVII (Sept.-June, 1967-68), 316-327, where the author interprets Oldenberg’s thesis to mean “a water-dragon—who later got identified with Agni because of the latter’s relation to the cloud-water in the form of lightning,” p. 317.

¹⁷ Louis H. Gray, ‘The Indo-Iranian Deity Apām Napāt,’ *Arch. f. Rel.*, III (1900), esp. 20ff.; *The Foundations of the Iranian Religions* (Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala Sons, 1925?), p. 135.

¹⁸ Maneckji Nusservanji Dhalla, *Zoroastrian Theology From the Earliest Times to the Present Day* (New York: 1914), p. 141; *History of Zoroastrianism* (New York, London, etc.: Oxford University Press, 1938), pp. 229-230.

¹⁹ Karl Friedrich Geldner (trans.), *Der Rig-Veda* (*HOS*, XXXIII, XXXV; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), I, 321n; III, 382n.

²⁰ Dandekar is careful to maintain the distinctiveness of Apām Napāt from Agni throughout the *Rgveda*. See R. N. Dandekar, ‘Some Aspects of the Agni-Mythology in the Veda,’ *JOIB*, XI.4 (June 1962), 363-68.

²¹ Sadashiv Ambadas Dange, ‘The Bull and the Fiery Fluid from the *Rgveda*,’ *JOIB*, XVII.3 (March, 1968), 216ff.

²² Mary Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, I (The Early Period) (Leiden/Köln: E. J. Brill, 1975), 40-52; ‘On Varuṇa’s Part in Zoroastrianism,’ in Mohammad Djafar Moïnfar (ed.), *Mélanges Linguistiques offerts à Émile Benveniste* (Dépositaire: Éditions Peeters, 1975), pp. 55-64.

argues that if we accept the hypothesis that the Indians once worshipped Asura *Medhā, identical with the Iranian Ahura Mazdā, the great god Varuṇa then becomes isolated, leaving him without a counterpart in Iran. The way out of this predicament is to suggest that Varuṇa was (and still is) worshipped in Iran as a deity distinct from Ahura Mazdā under another name, viz., Apām Napāt. In the Avesta, then, Varuṇa is known only by his attribute,²³ while in the Ṛgveda both the attribute and the primary name are used. Two problems, however, emerge with this argument. First, we have in the Ṛgveda two separate and distinct deities, Apām Napāt and Varuṇa. Boyce responds by quoting verses such as RV.X.8.5, where Apām Napāt appears to be in apposition to Varuṇa,²⁴ and RV.I.22.6 and X.149.2, where Apām Napāt could be a substitute for Varuṇa.²⁵ Second, unlike the Avestan god, the Ṛgveda Apām Napāt is clearly associated with the fire god Agni. Boyce argues that this association is only occasional and has little to do with the ritual²⁶—conclusions which, however, need revaluation.

The interpretation of Apām Napāt as a god of the waters leads quite naturally to his identification with Soma. One of the first to suggest this possibility is Bergaigne,²⁷ who assigns Apām Napāt alternately to Agni as an epithet, viz., lightning, or to Soma in apposition. Bergaigne's interpretation is based primarily upon the god's watery nature, but depends as well upon his fiery qualities which ally him with the intoxicating properties of Soma. A. Hillebrandt (1891)²⁸

²³ Boyce argues that although the Zoroastrian Apām Napāt appears to be only a minor deity, he plays a very important role in the cult, for the afternoon of each day is under his protection (the morning being under the protection of Mithra). Furthermore, she argues, there are some passages in the Avesta which suggest that Apām Napāt was once considered a great god, for he is the only other god besides Ahura Mazdā and Mithra who is ever called "Ahura." Finally, Boyce points out that Apām Napāt occurs with Mithra in a number of passages and, together, the two appear with the notion of *aša* (= Vedic *ṛtā*), just like the Vedic Mitra and Varuṇa. See Boyce, *History*, I, 41ff.; 'Varuṇa,' 58ff.

²⁴ Boyce, *History*, I, 47. The verse, however, appears in a hymn to Agni and is in actual apposition to Jātavedas, an aspect of Agni.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, I, 47n.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 46-47.

²⁷ Bergaigne, *op. cit.*, I, 167; II, 17ff. See also Dandekar, *op. cit.*, pp. 363-368.

²⁸ Alfred Hillebrandt, *Vedische Mythologie*, I (Breslau: Wilhelm Koebner, 1891), 365-380; see also II, (Breslau: M. & H. Marcus, 1899), 59, 126-134; 'Vedische Einzelheiten,' *ZDMG*, XLVIII (1894), 422-23; *Vedische Mythologie, Kleine Ausgabe* (Breslau: M. & H. Marcus, 1910), 53.

accepts this identification, and thereby extends his controversial theory that Soma is a god of the moon into the mythology of Apām Napāt: Apām Napāt becomes an old name for the moon, i.e., "ein Mondgott," and thereby intimately associated with Soma. Following this lunar identification of Hillebrandt, E. Hardy (1893)²⁹ gives the name Apām Napāt specifically to the moon shining in the middle of the nighttime waters.

A final contribution to the interpretation of Apām Napāt is that of J. Gonda (1957). According to Gonda, Apām Napāt is not only the 'child of the waters' as most maintain, but the child of young women, who "is to be attended to, suckled and fed."³⁰ He believes that the original deity, manifesting the poet's interest "in the feminine aspects of life," became confused with the water-born Agni and consequently with lightning born from the rain-bearing clouds.³¹

II

As we have seen, there have been a variety of interpretations assigned to Apām Napāt. But it is clear from their inconsistency that the meaning of the god remains problematic. We must now turn to the Ṛgveda and, investigating his significance in the text and the tradition as a whole, decide whether the present confusion results from the problematic nature of Apām Napāt himself, or from the specific modes of interpretation.

Apām Napāt is invoked approximately thirty times in the Ṛgveda and, according to the Anukramaṇī, is addressed by only two hymns (RV.II.35 and X.30). Etymologically, his name presents no real difficulty. The first word *apām* is clearly the genitive plural of *áp* 'water,' and the second *nápāt/náptṛ* belongs with the IE **nepōt/*nept* meaning 'sister's son' (i.e., 'nephew'), 'daughter's son' (i.e., 'grand-son'), or more generally 'descendant.'³² In the Ṛgveda, as in later

²⁹ Edmund Hardy, *Die Vedische-brahmanische Periode der Religion des alten Indiens* (Münster i.W.: Aschendorff, 1893), pp. 38-39.

³⁰ Jan Gonda, *Some Observations on the Relations Between "Gods" and "Powers" in the Veda A propos of the Phrase 'Sūnuḥ Sahasāḥ'* ('s-Gravenhage: Mouton, 1957), p. 56.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² See Christian Bartholomae, *Altiranische Wörterbuch* (Strassburg: K. J. Trübner, 1904), pp. 328, 1039; Émile Benveniste, *Le Vocabulaire des institutions Indo-Européennes* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1969), I, 231-32, 256; J. Duchesne-

Indian literature, the latter two uses are generously attested,³³ but for the purposes of our discussion we will translate Apām Napāt in the more generalized sense as the 'child of the waters'—a phrase evoking the feminine and motherly character of the waters clearly meant by the early text.

In the R̥gveda, Apām Napāt is characterized by two distinct themes: fire and water. His fiery nature is the basis for his identification with the god Agni, while his watery nature is responsible for his association with Soma. It is his fire theme which at the outset seems most clear, for Apām Napāt is not only invoked in four hymns dedicated to Agni,³⁴ but is at times specifically equated with him. In RV.I.143.1, for instance, the poet sings: 'A very strong, very new prayer, the (essential) notion of the song, I bear forward to Agni, son of strength,³⁵ to Apām Napāt, the dear and timely Hotar, who has sat down upon the earth together with the Vasus.'³⁶ And in RV.X.8.5, Apām Napāt is identified with the fire particularly called Jātavedas: 'You have become the eye, the protector of great truth; you have become Varuṇa, since you pursue truth; you have become Apām Napāt, Jātavedas; you have become a messenger (for him) whose oblation you shall enjoy.'

Extending the imagery of fire, Apām Napāt becomes identified with

Guillemin, 'Fire in Iran and in Greece,' *EW*, New Series, XIII.2-3 (June-Sept., 1962), 203; Georges Dumézil, 'Le Puits de Nechtan,' *Celtica*, VI (1963), 50-61; *Mythe et épopée* (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), III, 21n; Fay, 'Epithets,' p. clxxii; 'Lightning,' p. 1ff.; Jan Gonda, *Epithets in the R̥gveda* ('s-Gravenhage: Mouton, 1959), p. 84; Gray, 'Apām Napāt,' 30ff.; C. Scott Littleton, 'Poseidon as a Reflex of the Indo-European 'Source of Waters' God,' *JIES*, I.4 (Winter 1973), 425; Manfred Mayrhofer, *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen (A Concise Etymological Sanskrit Dictionary)* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, Universitätsverlag, 1957), X, 132-33; Jaan Puhvel, 'Aquam Exstinguere,' *JIES*, I.3 (Fall, 1973), 380.

³³ See, for instance, Hermann Grassmann, *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1873; rpt. 4th ed., Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1964), pp. 707-08.

³⁴ RV.I.143.1c; III.9.1c; VI.13.3d; X.8.5c.

³⁵ *sāhasaḥ sūnū* is a phrase sometimes applied to the aspect of Agni called Jātavedas, but it is not clear whether Apām Napāt is specifically identified with Jātavedas here, or not.

³⁶ The Sanskrit for this and all following translations from the R̥gveda may be found in Theodor Aufrecht (ed.), *Die Hymnen des Rigveda*, 2 vols. (Berlin: F. Dümmler, 1861-63), or in F. Max Müller (ed.), *The Hymns of the Rig-veda in the Samhita and Pada Texts* (London: Trübner, 1873).

Savitar, often thought to be the sun.³⁷ Apām Napāt is equated with Savitar in RV.I.22.6ab, ‘Sing to Apām Napāt, to Savitar, for favor;’ is invoked in two other verses with him;³⁸ and achieves cosmogonic significance in a hymn to him: ‘Where the (now-) established ocean gushed forth, of that Savitar knows, Apām Napāt! From there the earth, from there the spaces arose; from there Heaven and Earth spread out’ (RV.X.149.2). Apām Napāt is invoked in this verse, however, not because his fiery nature associates him with the solar and celestial Savitar, but because he is the ‘child of the waters’—a deity, as we shall see below, belonging to the torrential floods and called upon because Savitar’s role in the cosmogonic process is being described.³⁹

Apām Napāt’s Agnian characteristics contrast sharply, however, with his watery nature, for it is the general water lore of the Ṛgveda which provides him with his most significant milieu. This general water lore is best explained in hymns to the Āpaḥ, ‘Waters,’⁴⁰ where the worshipper must draw upon his knowledge of both “natural” water forms, i.e., streams, rivers, lakes, seas, rains, and snows,⁴¹ and “ritual” water forms, especially the use of water in the preparation of oblations and in the presentation of other kinds of liquid offerings which have characteristics similar to water, i.e., milk, ghee, Soma, and honey.⁴² In the ritual process, the properties of real or “natural” watercourses provide metaphors for the “ritual” waters: that is, as the hymns are recited during ritual activities with water or water-like oblations, images of “natural” waters are evoked to provide the “ritual” waters

³⁷ See, for instance, Oldenberg, ‘Savitar’ and ‘Noch einmal der vedische Savitar.’

³⁸ RV.II.31.6cd and VI.50.13ab.

³⁹ Savitar’s role in the cosmogonic process is to measure out the cosmic spaces and to direct the winds and waters by his ordinance. See, for instance, RV.V.81.3 and II.38.2.

⁴⁰ The word *áp* ‘water’ is cited well over five-hundred times in the Ṛgveda, and the waters are worshipped as goddesses in four entire hymns (RV.VII.47, 49; X.9, 30), in parts of hymns (e.g., RV.IV.58; X.17.10-14; I.23.16-23a), and in numerous verses.

⁴¹ Water as a simple, natural element known to the world of the Ṛgvedic worshipper is described in such passages as RV.VII.101.2 and V.83.6.

⁴² “Ritual” waters, described more abundantly in the Ṛgveda than “natural” waters, come as milk (*páyas*) (e.g., RV.X.9.9; X.17.14; X.30.13; I.153.4), ghee (*ghṛtá*) (e.g., RV.IV.58; X.17.10; VII.47.1; X.30.13), honey (*mádhu*) (e.g., RV.IV.58.1, 10, 11; VII.47.1; X.30.7, 8; IV.3.12; X.64.9), and Soma (e.g., RV.X.9.6; X.30.3).

with conceptually accessible, and perhaps especially idealized, properties.⁴³ Such a distinction may not be so precise for the poet, priest, or worshipper, however, since, for example, the use of the term *sindhu* may evoke simultaneously the images of a river important in mythology and history (i.e., the Sindhu River), and of sweetened Soma poured out in streams for ritual use. Furthermore, we should expect that in a text with such obvious ritual foundations as the Ṛgveda, the "ritual" images would predominate over the specifically "natural" ones, and inspection of the text confirms this assumption. In most cases it is clear that in describing waters, the "natural" and the "ritual" realms have become irretrievably mingled in the poet's mind.

This ritualizing of "natural" waters culminates in their designation as *devīr* 'goddesses.'⁴⁴ As divinities, the waters display little personality outside of their natural element but are, however, called *mātārah* 'mothers,'⁴⁵ a title which brings them into the specific realm of Apām Napāt. As mothers, the goddess-waters display all the nurturing qualities expected of such a title. In RV.X.91.6, for instance, the poets declare: 'The plants received him as the well-timed embryo. The motherly waters gave birth to that Agni. In a similar fashion, the trees and the plants and those who are pregnant give birth to him everywhere.'

It is by way of the title *mātārah*, that the general water lore of the Ṛgveda brings Apām Napāt firmly into its fold, for it is only in this context that his old designation as 'child of the waters' becomes accessible to the Vedic worldview. Furthermore, the hymnology of Apām Napāt draws upon both "natural" and "ritual" water images,

⁴³ See, for instance, RV.IV.58.6, 'Like rivers, the milk-streams flow together inside, cleansed by heart and mind. The waves of ghee run like deer fleeing from the hunter'; RV.III.32.6ab, 'When you, (O Indra!), having slain Vṛtra, sent forth the waters, to run like a steed in a race;' and RV.IV.58.8ab, 'Like beautiful, laughing maidens to wedding gatherings (the waters) hurry towards Agni.' This comparison of the waters, both "natural" and "ritual," with images from everyday life extends the already well-established correspondence between flowing rivers and streams of milk, between flooding oceans and the rising tide of Soma in the cup, between the spray of waves and stray drops of ghee. These two kinds of correspondences ("natural" waters / "ritual" waters; waters / living images) confirm the poet's use of the world around him to augment the world of the worshipper within the ritual ground.

⁴⁴ See RV.III.56.4; X.109.1; X.9.4; for a general description see Macdonell, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.

⁴⁵ See RV.X.17.10; X.64.9; III.9.2.

thus preserving the dichotomy of Ṛgvedic usage, but adapting it in a very peculiar way: although Apām Napāt is thought to reside in a real stream of flowing water, the *áp* of his name, as we shall see below, gradually comes to be associated with the smaller volumes of water used in ritual. Poets, for instance, describe Apām Napāt and the natural waters in RV.I.186.5bc, 'Like a nursing (mother) her child, the river pursues (that song) with which we shall speed Apām Napāt,' and in RV.X.149.2ab, 'Where the (now-) established ocean gushed forth, of that Savitar knows, O Apām Napāt!' In addition, he belongs with the water of ritual, for he delights in the oblation (*havyá*) (RV.X.8.5d), richly bestows wetness (*dānu pápriḥ*) (RV.VI.50.13b), and is guardian over the sweetest wave (*ūrmim...mādhumattamaṃ*) (RV.VII.47.2a), i.e., Soma.

In one of the two hymns addressed to Apām Napāt, the complexity of this god becomes apparent. In the following verses selected from RV.II.35, we see not only the coincidence of his fire and water themes, but the "natural" and "ritual" realms of water as well.

1. Desiring the prize, I have gushed forth in eloquence.
May the one born of the rivers take pleasure in my songs.
Certainly Apām Napāt is swift of impetus; ⁴⁶
he makes beautiful (the songs), for he has delighted (in them).
3. Some stream together, others stream off to the side,
(but still) the rivers fill a common sea basin.
The shining waters enclose
that bright and shining Apām Napāt.
4. Not ashamed to laugh, the young maidens, the waters,
stream around that youth, cleansing him.
With bright flames, he shines richly among us in the waters,
without needing kindling fuel and clothed in ghee.
5. To that unshakeable god,
the three wives, the goddesses, want to bring food.
He extends into the waters as if (going down) into the abysses.
He sucks the milk of the first to give birth.
7. In whose own home the good milking cow stands
which blesses the ritual drink; (there) he eats the strengthening
food.
He, Apām Napāt, prospering amidst the waters,
shines out to give the reverencing one goods.

⁴⁶ On *āśuhēman* and Apām Napāt, see also RV.II.31.6d and VII.47.2b.

8. He who with heavenly light amidst the waters
shines out far and wide, the truthful, ever-lively one;
as his branches, the other creatures
and plants are increased through their progeny.
9. For Apām Napāt has penetrated the lap (of the waters)
lying obliquely, while (himself) standing upright and clothed in
lightning.
Bearing forward his mighty greatness,
the golden-colored young maidens circle round him.
10. He is golden-formed, of golden-appearance;
indeed that Apām Napāt is golden-colored
after stepping down from a golden abode.
The gold-givers ⁴⁷ give him food.
11. In secret grows that countenance ⁴⁸
and the lovely name of this Apām Napāt,
whom the young maidens truly kindle.
Golden-colored ghee is his food.
13. As the bull he sowed the seed among them.
As the child he sucks them; they lick him.
That Apām Napāt, of indelible color,
here unites with the body, as it were, of another. ⁴⁹
14. Abiding in this highest abode,
shining everywhere with spotless (flames);
himself (clothed) in vestments, the young maidens, the waters,
stream around,
bearing ghee as food to (Apām) Napāt.

⁴⁷ The *hiraṇyadāh* must be either the attending priests who offer golden ghee to Apām Napāt as food (see vs. 11), or the ritual patrons who give gold as a fee or *dakṣinā*. On the latter, see Geldner, *op. cit.*, I, 322n.

⁴⁸ On the specific connotations of the word *ānikam* in this verse, see Böhlingk, *op. cit.*, I, 195, and Geldner, *op. cit.*, I, 322n. *ānikam* often appears with Apām Napāt in later literature, especially in the attributive phrase *agnér ānikam apá ā viveśa* which describes Apām Napāt as '(that) form of Agni (which) enters the waters' (VS.VIII.24; TS.I.4.45.1; MS.I.3.39; KS.IV.13; XXIX.3; ŚB.IV.4.5.12; ApŚS.VIII.8.3). Recalling RV.II.35.11ab, the later phrase substitutes *agnér* for *asyá* (= Apām Napāt), thus reaffirming the Brāhmaṇic identification of Apām Napāt with Agni. *asyá* in RV.II.35.11a, however, cannot refer to Agni because the only antecedent for the pronoun here is Apām Napāt, the divinity to whom the entire hymn is addressed.

⁴⁹ Geldner interprets this to mean the identification of Apām Napāt with the ritual fire Agni (*op. cit.*, I, 322n); but, more likely, it refers to the mixing of the waters with Soma (see the discussion below).

The fiery qualities of Apām Napāt are evident here in his consistently Agnian characteristics: his golden color, his luminous appearance, his consumption of ghee, his delight in the worshipper's song, and his bestowal of blessings. Equally evident, however, is his abode in "natural" water places, particularly the river and the sea, and his intimate association with the waters of "ritual," especially milk, the ritual drink (*svadhā*, 7b),⁵⁰ and ghee. Above all else, the waters which surround Apām Napāt lapping him with their waves have definite "mothering" characteristics, for these young maidens (*yuvatī*, 4a, 11c; *yahvī*, 9d, 14d) cleanse him, feed him, suckle and lick him—images which move back and forth across the boundary between "natural" and "ritual."

Given the complexity of Apām Napāt in this hymn and in the other previous verses, how are we to interpret his significance in the Ṛgveda? Is he in fact the lightning, as so many scholars would have us believe and as verses 3, 4, and 9, for instance, would support? A lightning interpretation, however, convenient as it is, must be ruled out for the poets make no specific mention here of rain, of thundering noises, or of quick flashes of light. We must look elsewhere, then, for our answer.

III

One tradition of interpretation not yet considered is that of comparative mythology.⁵¹ Under this rubric and led particularly by G. Dumézil (1963, 1973), scholars have concluded that Apām Napāt can only be explained by resorting to the broader Indo-European context. Dumézil concludes that Apām Napāt belongs to a tradition preserved primarily in Old Irish, Roman, Iranian, and Indian sources, and is best described as a fiery essence hidden in the waters which must be appeased for the well-being of man. The names of the heroes in each

⁵⁰ The exact identity of *svadhā* is unclear. It can, on the one hand, refer to the specific mixture of ghee, etc. offered to the ancestral Pitaras or, on the other, to the liquid oblation in general.

⁵¹ See C. Scott Littleton, *The New Comparative Mythology, An Anthropological Assessment of the Theories of Georges Dumézil*, rev. ed. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1973); David M. Knipe, 'American Aid to Dumézil: A Critical Review of Recent Essays,' *Journ. of As. St.*, XXXIV.1 (Nov. 1974), 159-167; Alf Hiltebeitel, rev. of *Mythe et épopée*, Vol. II, III, by Georges Dumézil, *HR*, XV.1 (Aug. 1975), 90-100.

tradition are etymologically related,⁵² and the myths and corresponding rituals share a common set of themes.

The Old Irish myth centers upon Nechtan, a member of a class of divinities known as the Tuatha dé Danann and the keeper of a sacred well whose waters contain a mysterious substance which burns and glows. This substance shatters the eyes and is fatal to all but Nechtan and his three cupbearers, who can safely approach and draw water from the well. One day Nechtan's wife Bóand approaches the well, either to disprove the taboo by the force of her beauty or to prove herself innocent of the charges of adultery with the god Dagda. She circles the well three times, and three waves rise up over her, severing a thigh, a hand, and an eye. Bóand flees, mutilated and pursued by the waters, which form a river (the Boyne) in her wake, and eventually reaches the seacoast where she is overwhelmed by the waters and drowns.⁵³

The Roman myth is associated with the lake of Mount Alban. At the beginning of the fourth century B.C., Rome is engaged in battle with one of its Etruscan neighbors from the city of Veii for control of central Italy. But in the tenth year of the war, because of some religious improprieties, the deep crater-lake of Mount Alban rises suddenly during the drought of the hot summer to the tops of the surrounding crater. It finally breaches its mountain barrier and ravages the nearby countryside. In order to know the causes of this divine anger, the Romans consult the Oracle at Delphi, which reveals that unauthorized magistrates have performed rituals in the vicinity of the lake thereby offending the gods, and that if the waters are allowed to go to the sea, Rome will lose both the war and its sovereignty. The Romans thereupon divert the waters into irrigation canals, bringing

⁵² The name of each hero belongs to the IE **nepōt/*nept*: Indian Apām Napāt and Iranian Apām Napāt from Indo-Iranian *napāt/naptr*; Latin Neptune from an analogical reformation of an earlier name related to **nept-o-no*; and Old Irish Nechtan from the feminine *necht* 'niece' which belongs with *nīe* 'nephew' and is parallel to the Latin *neptis*, feminine of *nepōs*, both of which belong with the enlargement **nept-o-no*. See Dumézil, 'Puits,' pp. 58-60; *Mythe et épopée*, III, 21n, 35; Puhvel, 'Aquam Exstinguere,' p. 379; Littleton, 'Poseidon,' p. 425; Patrick K. Ford, 'The Well of Nechtan and "La Gloire Lumineuse,"' in Gerald James Larson (ed.), *Myth in Indo-European Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 67.

⁵³ Taken from Dumézil, 'Puits,' pp. 54-56; *Mythe et épopée*, III, 27-28; Puhvel, 'Aquam Exstinguere,' p. 380; Littleton, 'Poseidon,' pp. 425-26; Ford, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

relief to the drought-stricken countryside and rendering the waters "ritually harmless."⁵⁴

In the Iranian myth, King Yima rules over the golden age which ends when he sins. The *khvarənah*, or Divine Glory, flees his side in the direction of the mythical lake Vourukaša, and Apām Napāt, the keeper of the lake, seizes the *khvarənah* and deposits it in the midst of the waters. Ahura Mazdā urges men to try and claim the *khvarənah*, promising the victor numerous earthly and heavenly rewards. The first attempt is made by the Turanian, Frañrasyan, a foreigner, who dives three times into the lake, but who fails because only the *airya* are entitled to the *khvarənah*. In each attempt, the *khvarənah* escapes from Frañrasyan whose wild pursuits cause great overflows from the lake. In this way various rivers come into being, and one, the Haētumant which still contains the escaped *khvarənah*, is Lake Vourukaša's most eulogized tributary.⁵⁵

We can see from the above that the myths from the Old Irish, Roman, and Iranian sources have four major themes: 1) a burning or glowing element 2) hidden in the midst of the waters 3) attainable only by those who are qualified and forbidden to those who are not, 4) but whose illegitimate attempts to claim the element result in the overflowing of the waters. In addition, the water in each of these

⁵⁴ Taken from Puhvel, 'Aquam Exstinguere,' pp. 381-82; Littleton, 'Poseidon,' pp. 426-27. The probable date for this event is July 23, which coincides with the date of the *Neptunalia*, the annual festival in honor of the god Neptune. Dumézil suggests that this event in the Veian war is actually an euhemerized myth casting Neptune in its leading role and involving a basic opposition between the illegitimate Roman magistrates and the divine powers of the lake, and that the *Neptunalia*, falling upon the hottest day of the year coincides with the "fire in the water" theme of the Old Irish, Iranian, and Indian traditions. See Dumézil, 'Puits,' pp. 59-61; *Mythe et épopée*, III, 39ff.; Littleton, 'Poseidon,' pp. 426-28. J. Puhvel, however, does not emphasize the opposition between qualified and unqualified figures, but rather the theme of "fire in the water" which involves the secret hoarding of a burning substance in the waters and the consequent dangers of its use. He maintains that in the Roman myth the heat of the waters comes not from the presence of the summer sun but from some internal igneous source, and that the mandatory checking of the crater floods is not to stop the ravage of the waters on the land, but to "extinguish" the fiery substance hidden in the deluge. Puhvel, 'Aquam Exstinguere,' pp. 382-85; Littleton, 'Poseidon,' pp. 428-29.

⁵⁵ Taken from Dumézil, 'Puits,' pp. 52-54; *Mythe et épopée*, III, 24-27; Puhvel, 'Aquam Exstinguere,' pp. 379-380; Littleton, 'Poseidon,' p. 425; Ford, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69; Steven E. Greenebaum, 'Vr̥trahan-Vr̥əthragna: India and Iran,' in Larson, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

myths is a body of "natural" water: Old Irish / well-water; Roman / crater-lake-water; and Iranian / lake-water. What, then, happens to this material when it enters the Indian tradition?

IV

According to Dumézil, the Indo-European proto-myth is preserved in the Old Irish, Roman, and Iranian sources but has been lost to the Ṛgveda, which preserves instead the elements of a corresponding ritual.⁵⁶ While Dumézil's assessment is in general correct, i.e., that the Ṛgveda has "ritualized" the Apām Napāt tradition, Indian sources do in fact preserve the major themes of the old myth.

In RV.II.35 (see above), for instance, Apām Napāt is, first, characterized as a burning, glowing element. He is 'bright and shining' (3c), 'shining everywhere with spotless flames' (14b), 'golden' (10), 'clothed in lightning' (9b) and 'kindled' (11c) like a fire. Any burning, glowing element inherited by the Indian tradition would naturally be absorbed into the Agnian system, and it is clear from these descriptions that it is only within the realm of the fire-god that Apām Napāt is conceptually manageable. Second, Apām Napāt is clearly hidden in the midst of the waters. He is 'born of the rivers' (1b), 'extends into the waters as if (going down) into the abysses' (5c), and 'prosper amidst the waters' (7c). Furthermore, 'the shining waters enclose' him (3cd), 'the golden-colored young maidens circle round him' (9d), and 'him, the young maidens, the waters, stream around' (14cd).⁵⁷ Unlike the Old Irish, Roman, and Iranian myths, however, in which the central figure is the guardian of the fiery essence amidst the waters, Apām Napāt of the Indian tradition is often characterized as the fiery essence itself.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Dumézil, 'Puits,' p. 54.

⁵⁷ It is because of his being hidden in the midst of the waters that Apām Napāt is associated with several minor deities of the Ṛgveda: Trita, the *āptyā* 'watery' (see RV.II.31.6; V.41.10); Ahi Budhnya, the 'serpent of the deep' (see RV.I.186.5; II.31.6; VI.50.13, 14; VII.34.15, 16, 17; VII.35.13) and Aja Ekapād, who abides in a variety of aqueous bodies (see RV.II.31.6; VI.50.13, 14; VII.35.13).

⁵⁸ Some see the Ṛgvedic Apām Napāt as himself both essence and custodian (see Ford, *op. cit.*, p. 68), or as a "guardian spirit immanent in waters" (Puhvel, 'Aquam Exstinguere,' p. 379), while others see him only tended and cared for by the young and mothering waters which surround him (Dumézil, 'Puits,' p. 51; Ford, *op. cit.*, p. 68). It is clear, however, that despite the partial transformation of Apām Napāt from custodian into essence, the Ṛgvedic material belongs with the Indo-European proto-myth.

Third, Apām Napāt in the waters is accessible only to those who are ritually qualified. For it is only the priest who sings with eloquence (1a) and the patron who provides desired fees like a 'good milking cow' (7a), who are in his favor. Furthermore, as we shall see below, Apām Napāt is appeased primarily by the Adhvaryu, the ritual ministrant, who approaches the river and with his helpers successfully pleases the god and brings water back to the ritual ground for the preparation of Soma. Finally, the waters in which Apām Napāt resides are, like their Indo-European counterparts, rapid, overflowing, and harmful (or simply non-beneficial) to the illegitimate. Not only is Apām Napāt himself 'swift of impetus' (1c) and 'ever-lively' (8b), but the waters in which he dwells 'stream around' (4b, 14d) him, lapping him vigorously with their swelling waves.⁵⁹ Furthermore, these waters are friendly or potentially friendly only through the proper performance of the ritual.⁶⁰

If the essential elements of the Indo-European proto-myth are indeed preserved in the Apām Napāt tradition of the Ṛgveda, what peculiar changes take place once the material is in the hands of the Indian seers? The answer to this lies in Dumézil's suggestion that "l'Inde védique ne témoigne que par un rituel,"⁶¹ or more precisely, that the material in India becomes "ritualized." The result is the Aponaptriya ceremony.

Brāhmaṇic literature places the Aponaptriya early in the Agni-ṣṭoma: it occurs on the actual day of the Soma-feast, as one of the preparatory ceremonies, just prior to the *prātaḥsavānā* 'morning pressing' and just after the *prātaranuvākā* 'morning prayer.'⁶² The purpose of the Aponaptriya is to ritually sanctify the drawing of water for the Soma and to bless the waters from various containers as they are mixed together. The sequence of recitation of verses is as follows:

- RV.X.30.1-9, 11, 10 — as the Adhvaryu and his assistants go to fill the Ekadhanā pitchers.
 X.30.13 — as soon as the priests and the waters come into view.

⁵⁹ In other verses, the waters 'pursue' the song (RV.I.186.5b), 'the ocean gushed forth' (RV.X.149.2a), and Apām Napāt is called *suprā tūrti* 'forging well ahead' (RV.III.9.1d).

⁶⁰ See RV.VI.50.7; VII.47.4; X.30.2.

⁶¹ Dumézil, 'Puits,' p. 54.

⁶² See, for instance, ŚB.III.9.3; AB.II.19, 20; and KB.XII. 1-3.

- V.43.1 — as the priests and the waters come up.
 II.35.3 — as the Ekadhanā waters are mixed with the
 Vasatīvarī waters. (This verse alleviates
 any conflict between the waters.)
 I.83.2 — as water is poured into the Hotar's cup.

When the waters are brought to the Soma cart, the Hotar addresses the Adhvaryu on the significance of the waters for the pressing of Soma (see esp. AB.II.20).

- I.23.16-18 — for the receipt of certain desires.
 X.30.14 — as the Vasatīvarī and Ekadhanā waters are
 being set down in various places on or
 near the Soma cart.
 X.30.15 — when the waters have been set down.⁶³

Just prior to these directions for the Aponaptriyaṃ, some accounts tell the story of Kavaṣa Ailūṣa. In the Aitareyabrāhmaṇa (II.19), for instance, the Brāhmaṇic Kavaṣa⁶⁴ is the child of a slave and a cheat who appears just as the priests are about to perform a sacrifice to Sarasvatī. They send him out into the desert where he is overcome with thirst. He comes upon the hymn RV.X.30 and goes to the abode of the waters, where the waters (Sarasvatī) swell out after him. The priests, seeing that the gods know him, decide that he must be a Brahman and call him back to the performance of the ceremony.⁶⁵ In the Kauṣītaki-brāhmaṇa (XII.3), this same story is told, stressing instead, however, Kavaṣa's anger at originally being dismissed by the priests. It also tells a second story (XII.1). Because the waters of the sacrifice confer immortality, the Rakṣases, seeking to disrupt the sacrifice, watch the waters at the fords and kill all those who come near. Kavaṣa again sees the hymn, RV.X.30, recites it, and thereby drives away the Rakṣases. Now people can go to the waters in safety.

⁶³ *Ibid.*; see also W. Caland et V. Henry, *L'Agniṣṭoma*, I (Paris: Ernest Leroux, éditeur, 1906), pp. 138-148.

⁶⁴ The R̥gvedic Kavaṣa, on the other hand, who may or may not be identical with the Brāhmaṇic figure, is a respected priest and, according to the Anukramaṇī, author of several hymns—including the Aponaptriyaṃ hymn, RV.X.30 (see below). See Arthur Anthony Macdonell and Arthur Berriedale Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects* (1st ed., London, 1912; 3rd rpt., Delhi, Varanasi, Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1967), I, 143-44.

⁶⁵ See Sylvain Lévi, *La Doctrine du Sacrifice* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, éditeur, 1898), p. 150.

These two Kavaṣa stories are significant for the Aponaptrīyam, for they indicate the preservation of older Indo-European themes. Kavaṣa is the child of a slave, a non-Brahman, and a cheat. He is therefore ineligible to participate in the ritual or to approach the waters for Soma. He comes in contact, however, with RV.X.30 and, reciting it properly, becomes accepted by the orthodox priesthood. Legitimacy here is not primarily a matter of birth or office, as it is in the other Indo-European myths (although Kavaṣa is eventually called a “Brahman”), but rather a matter of knowledge of the ritual. It is only in possession of the proper formulae that Kavaṣa acquires access to the divine waters.

Let us return now to the Ṛgveda and examine the Aponaptrīyam hymn for features it has in common with its Indo-European heritage. All of RV.X.30, with the exception of verse 12, which in Brāhmaṇic tradition is recited as the opening verse of the morning prayer, is spoken by the Hotar while the Adhvaryu and his helpers perform the appropriate ritual actions:

The Adhvaryus are sent to fetch water (1-9): ⁶⁶

1. Let the pathway go godwards for the (easy passage of the)
formulation!
to the waters as with the impulse of the spirit,
to the great fount of Mitra and Varuṇa.
Let me deliver up the well-turned (poem) to (the stream) of wide
expanse!
2. Adhvaryus! Offer up oblations!
Eagerly go to the eager waters,
on whom the ruddy falcon (i.e., the sun) looks down!
Good-handed ones! Seize that wave today!
3. Adhvaryus! Go to the waters, to the sea!
Worship Apām Napāt with oblations!
He shall give the beautifully clarified wave to you today.
Press sweetened Soma for him!
4. He it is who without kindling shall shine in the waters,
whom the inspired ones summon at the ceremonies.
Apām Napāt! Give the sweetened waters
with which Indra grows to heroic strength!

⁶⁶ The ritual directions indicated here are those suggested by Geldner. See *op. cit.*, III, 175.

5. To those in whom Soma delights and is pleased,
as a young man in lovely maidens,
to those waters go, Adhvaryu!
When you have poured them, then purify them with plants!
6. Certainly the young maidens shall surrender themselves to the
young man
when, eager, he approaches those eager ones.
They are of one accord in spirit, they are of one mind—
the Adhvaryus, the Dhiṣaṇa, and the divine waters.
7. He who with (great) efforts made a broad realm for you,
who released you from a great curse,
for that Indra send forward, waters,
the sweetened wave which delights the gods!
8. For him, send forward the sweetened wave,
which is your child, rivers!, and the source of sweetness,
the ghee-backed (wave) to be summoned at the ceremonies!
Fertile waters! Hear my call!
9. Rivers! Send forth that delightful wave,
Indra's drink, which excites both (worlds),
that source, exhilarating, arisen from the Uśānā plant,
born of clouds, three-fold, and widely dispersing!

The water, arriving at the ritual ground, is welcomed (10-13):

10. Hurrying here in two streams,
sweeping forward in continuous rows, as if fighting for cattle,
the mothers and mistresses of the world,
praise those waters, seer!, grown together, of the same womb!
11. Quicken our ceremony for the worship of gods!
Quicken the formulation for the winning of booty!
In the name of truth, open up your udder!
Be obliging to us, waters!
12. Fertile waters, indeed you rule over the good,
and you bear the excellent and immortal intention,
and are the mistresses of the wealth of good offspring.
Then let Sarasvatī give vitality to the singer!
13. When the waters coming here appeared,
bearing ghee, milk, and honey,
they were united in spirit with the Adhvaryus,
bringing well-pressed Soma to Indra.

The water is put in its place (14-15ab):

14. These fertile (waters), rich in vitality, have arrived.
 Set them down, Adhvaryus, friends!
 Place yourselves upon the ritual strew, ones worthy of Soma!
 Reaching agreement with Apām Napāt!

The Soma-pressing begins (15cd):

15. The eager waters have now come to this ritual strew.
 Seeking the gods, they have sat down at the ceremony.
 Adhvaryus! Press the Soma for Indra!
 The worship of the gods has been made easy for you.

This hymn makes clear that the general outline of the Brāhmanic Aponaptriṣyam is known at least as early as the late Ṛgveda and may even be known earlier.⁶⁷ It also makes clear that the general outline of the Indo-European proto-myth has been preserved almost in tact up through the formative periods of the Ṛgveda, for each of the four major themes is found here. Apām Napāt is, first, a burning, glowing element, evident from his descriptions as '(he) who without kindling shall shine' (4a). This may be misleading, however, for Apām Napāt is not only a luminous essence hidden in the waters, but also the very keeper of the golden wave who must himself be appeased for possession of the waters: 'He shall give the beautifully clarified wave' (3c) and 'Apām Napāt!, give the sweetened waters' (4c). Apām Napāt is, second, the inhabitant of the waters and dweller amongst the waves, evident to the worshipper in almost every verse of the hymn. Third, Apām Napāt must be appeased by a legitimate functionary who has proper knowledge of the ritual; in this case, it is the Adhvaryu and his helpers, who must press Soma for the god and offer him oblations. The result of the Adhvaryus' proper performance is that they and the divine waters 'are of one accord in spirit... of one mind' (6c), and are 'united in spirit' (13c), 'reaching agreement with Apām Napāt' (14d). Finally, although there are no illegitimate attempts to claim Apām Napāt or his waves, the waters in which he abides are all but torrential. The river is a 'great fount' (1c), a stream 'of wide expanse' (1d);

⁶⁷ Other verses invoking Apām Napāt clearly indicate that the appeasement of this god and his waters, and the fetching hither of a wave for ritual use, are themes known throughout the Ṛgveda. See, for instance, RV.II.35; I.122.4; III.9.1; VII.47.2; I.186.5bcd; I.143.1.

the waves are 'eager' (2b, 6b) and sent forward (7d, 8a); and the waters are asked to 'Be obliging to us' (11d) instead of vigorous and headstrong.

In one respect, however, the Indian material is different from its Indo-European counterparts. While the water of the Old Irish, Roman, and Iranian myths is primarily "natural" (well-water, crater-lake-water, and lake-water, respectively), that of the Indian is increasingly "ritual." Although the Vedic Apām Napāt dwells in a river and sends forth its 'child' (8b), the wave, the *āp* of his name comes instead to be associated with the smaller volumes of water used in ritual. The waves are no longer ordinary river water but have already become, prior to the actual ritual, 'beautifully clarified' (3c) as if they were ghee, and 'sweetened' (4c, 7c, 8a) as if they were Soma. And they are already, even before approaching the sacrificial ground, called 'ghee-backed' (8c) and 'Indra's drink' (9a, see 4d, 7cd). What is clear here is the ease with which Indian poets move back and forth across the boundary between "natural" and "ritual": they plant the source of water firmly within the natural river, but at the same time foreshadow its eventual ritual use and, further, give the natural properties of water to the liquids found in ritual.

The name Apām Napāt, then, becomes significant in two ways. He is, on the one hand, the 'child of the waters,' who abides in the midst of the fertile and mothering river waves and, as their fiery custodian, guards those waves from illegitimate intruders. But he is also the 'child of the waters,' who abides in the sanctified wave which is mixed with Soma and, as a fiery essence, is completely compatible with the intoxicating properties of the ritual drink. Thus, we might summarize the dual nature of the Vedic Apām Napāt as follows: when we view the waters as "natural," Apām Napāt is primarily a custodian; when we view the waters as "ritual," Apām Napāt is primarily an essence.⁶⁸

The "Indianization" of Apām Napāt, then, is the "ritualization" of the Indo-European proto-myth, whereby the two major components of the god, water and fire, are responsible for the god's absorption into the two larger, established systems of Soma and Agni. Apām Napāt's watery abode is equated with the waters already established

⁶⁸ Lack of supporting passages, however, preclude us from finally identifying the Agnian fieriness of Apām Napāt with the intoxication of Soma.

in the R̥gveda: on the “natural” and, in this case, less significant level, the fertile mother goddesses, the Āpaḥ; and on the “ritual” and more important level, the waters of Soma. Apām Napāt’s fiery nature, on the other hand, leads to his concomitant identification with Agni and to his appropriation of numerous Agnian characteristics. This identification with Agni, however, is secondary, for Apām Napāt is more intimately bound to the ritual for the preparation of Soma.

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THE MANDAEAN ŠITIL AS AN EXAMPLE OF
“THE IMAGE ABOVE AND BELOW”

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Introduction

In the study of Gnostic systems one has become accustomed to termini involving outspoken dualism. Examples are “light-darkness,” “spiritual-material,” “upper world-lower world,” and so forth. Mythological figures and events, value-carrying designations and descriptions often seem to belong strictly within a dualistic schema: light-beings pertain to the world of light, the counter-forces to that of darkness. Still, for any action to take place in Gnostic mythologies at all, a certain degree of communication between the two realms is required. Usually the events run along well known avenues, however, and one rests assured that after the battle between “good” and “evil,” the forces return to their respective domains. The course of action in a Gnostic drama often rather resembles tests undertaken in a chemist’s laboratory where events are carefully controlled.

Beneath the surface, though, not only do Gnostic mythologies display more complexity, they also sometimes nearly mock the pattern which one has come to expect. To illustrate such an itchy, and therefore useful, atypical example, let me introduce the personage of Šitil in the Mandaean religion. Šitil appears in two main settings: 1. He is part of that busy triumvirate from the light-world, the savior/revealer—team Hibil, Šitil and Anoš, 2. He is son of the earthly Adam.

I.

The three saviors, called *’utras* (i.e. angels, guardians),¹ relate to each other as grandfather, father and son, and they are also brothers. Hibil is the oldest, father/brother of Šitil who is, in his turn, father/brother of Anoš. The three reside in the light-world before the earthly world is created. When Hibil, in this time of pre-existence, descends

¹ R. Macuch, *Handbook of Classical and Modern Mandaic*, de Gruyter/Berlin 1965, 210, 20-21. *’Utra* originally meant “wealth.”

to the underworld in order to find out which of the creatures down there plan to wage war against the light-world, he is accompanied by his two invisible brothers.

After the creation of the earthly world, Tibil, the three 'utras act, one after another, as guardians of the three earthly epochs.² Hibil admonishes and protects the believers in the age ending with destruction by fire. Šitil, during whose guardianship the true Naṣoraeism establishes itself,³ watches the earth until it is annihilated by water. Anoš, appearing in the time of Herod (and Jesus) in Jerusalem, is somehow still looking after the earth in its last, evil stage. More earthly chieftains correspond to these heavenly guardians, the last leader is Šum bar Nu, the one who survived the floods.

Unlike the human leaders of the faithful community, the 'utras do not, at first glance, seem to get overly involved in earthly affairs. They are busy commuting between the worlds, conveying reports regarding the circumstances on earth, to the light-world. Constantly annoyed by demonic forces,—headed by Ruha, El and the planets,—the 'utras seem to possess an invisible armor; the demons' cunning attacks never quite hit home. Disarmed, at least temporarily, the demons must reckon with some unidentified power belonging to these ambassadors of light.

Of the three brothers, Šitil is the one least frequently mentioned as to entanglements with earthly or demonic forces. A surveyor contemplating earthly affairs from what seems both a psychological and a physical distance, his portrait is painted somewhat paler than that of his brothers.

II.

At first glance, then, nothing much surprising seems to be in store for an inquirer into the figure of Šitil. But, turning to *Left Ginza*,⁴ one finds new food for thought. Here a different, and very human, Šitil appears. Šitil bar Adam is son of the stubborn first man Adam who has reached the respectable age of 1000 years and refuses to die. The story is this:

² M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza, der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1925, *GR (Right Ginza)* 1, 1, p. 27, 17ff.—Manda d'Hajje was the guardian of the first age, with Adam as the earthly caretaker.

³ M. Lidzbarski, *GR* 15, 6, p. 320, 9-10.—Naṣoraeism = Mandaeism.

⁴ M. Lidzbarski, *GL (GL = Left Ginza)* 1, 1, p. 423ff.

In its ineffable wisdom, the Great Life has decided that it is time for the firstborn, earthly man to go back to his origin. The angel of death, Šauriel-Qmamir-Ziwa, descends to Adam. Šauriel "nimmt keine Bestechung an, empfängt kein Geschenk und tauscht niemand gegen einen andern ein."⁵ In short, he knows his task, and tells Adam it's best for him to leave before senility overtakes him. Adam, offended and enraged, maintains that he wants to live for another 1000 years. He likens himself to a fully ripe fruit, and one should eat the newer, green sprouts first, i.e. somebody younger, less dignified, more "tasty," ought to die instead of him.

The angel of death conveys Adam's embarrassing reaction to the light-world, and then descends for the second time. Adam now suggests a substitute for himself, viz. his youngest son Šitil, who is only 80, a mere lad, and who has not yet slept with a woman, consequently has no offspring, and has not shed blood in the world. In short, Šitil is not yet a man. Šauriel explains matters to Šitil, who is somewhat taken aback and suggests that his father die, since he is older. Still, Šitil does not dare to oppose, for the message is indeed a decree from the light-world, and so he agrees to die.

Šitil next ascends to the light like a good Gnostic, acquires full understanding, and begs that his father Adam may see, hear and be enlightened.⁶ Pretty gracious of a kid sent into death by his father! Adam subsequently beholds the light-world, is amazed, and wants to die immediately. He is not granted this, however,—rather, Šitil sternly instructs him that no human may decide the hour of death. Further, Šitil declares that he himself was forced to leave prematurely, like an unborn baby, like an infant with its mouth full of milk, like a bride,—all too abruptly torn away from life.⁷ Some die too early, others live for too long, but only the light-world decides the final day. So, Adam, who at first refused to die, is now told that since he wants to depart, he may not.

In the above section one notices how the relation between Adam and Šitil changes. While alive, Šitil is an obedient son, but when he has risen to the light, he rebukes his father. But Šitil has died in a most unusual manner, since one would expect the first man, Adam, to be

⁵ M. Lidzbarski, *GL* 1, 1, p. 425, 4-5.

⁶ M. Lidzbarski, *ibid.*, p. 428, 5-11.

⁷ M. Lidzbarski, *ibid.*, p. 428, 21ff.

the first one to depart from this world. This was also the original plan of the light-world. Still, in spite of Šauriel taking no bribes, receiving no gifts and never exchanging one candidate of death for another, vicarious death is exactly what happens! Since Šitil has died for his father, his soul is the most pure among human beings. Every Mandaean soul is therefore weighed against Šitil's soul in the scales of Abatur at the entrance of the world of light.⁸

III.

The question arises: do the two figures, Šitil the 'utra and Šitil bar Adam, have anything to do with each other? A possible answer requires some investigation. One does well to bear in mind that Šitil, as the unusually pure being, has not lived a full life according to Mandaean notions (the Mandaeans are neither ascetic nor particularly negatively disposed towards earthly life). What one has seen of Šitil as 'utra so far, however, points to no unusual traits.

But going further, taking a look into other 'utra-figures in Mandaism, one finds matters more complicated. In considering three other such figures, viz. Jošamin, Abatur and Ptahil, one notices that these become, to an increasing degree, involved in the creation of the world. They are responsible for this creation, in fact, and as a result lose their status as purely light-world residents; they become degraded to curators of watch-houses (*maṭarata*) that the soul must pass through. Abatur even receives his despicable role at the scales,—he falls from being “the elevated Abatur” (*Abatur Rama*) to “of the Scales” (*Mu-zania*). Weeping and lamenting, he must go on weighing souls until the last day of judgement. Similarly, his father Jošamin and his son Ptahil are stuck in their watch-stations, degraded and repenting until the end of time.

The curious loss of respectability in these 'utras has caused K. Rudolph, especially, to discern a stage of dualism preceeding a later, monistic development, signifying priestly attempts to reconcile the opposing traits within the 'utra-personality.⁹ An earlier, sterner atti-

⁸ E. S. Drower, *The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran*, Brill/Leiden 1962, repr. of 1937-ed., p. 199; and *The Canonical Prayerbook of the Mandaeans*, Brill/Leiden 1959, p. 106, n. 4.

⁹ K. Rudolph, *Theogonie, Kosmogonie und Anthropogonie in den mandäischen Schriften*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1965, pp. 136-38, p. 341ff.

tude gave way, it seems to him, to a more tolerant, albeit decadent view. But there are other possible interpretations of this puzzle. For, when one discovers both positive as well as negative elements within the same mythological personage, it does not necessarily follow that such traits force a split in that personality. Jošamin 'utra and Jošamin puffed-up peacock/polluted priest may be one and the same. This potential identity doesn't imply an artificial twist of thought, but tells something about the idea of the *dmuta*, the image above and below.¹⁰

Seldom understood within its religious-logical range of meaning the *dmuta*-idea needs consideration beyond that of a vulgar-philosophical statement like: what is up there must somehow be down here. The mere utterance of such a truism does not force one into a serious investigation into the religious meaning of the *dmuta*. Indeed, if there are images, of the same figure, above and below, then what does "above and below" imply? This is not just an airy speculation, but an explication of the conditions of the figures in question. In fact, conditions differ radically as to where the figure finds himself at any given instance. An 'utra in the lightworld is safe and sound,—in the earthly realm, however, he must proceed with caution. Matters get worse if the 'utra becomes entangled in the world-creation.

One might take a look at one such example, for instance, a tractate in *Das Johannesbuch*. Here Hibil, Šitil, Ptahil and Ajar (:Ether) show themselves as world-creators. There is a fifth personage, Šihlun, who takes a hostile attitude towards Hibil and Ajar, haughtily asking them how they envisage their complicated endeavor of the world-creation. Ptahil boldly advances, declaring that he will do it. Enraged, Šihlun hits him, saying, roughly: who do you think you are?¹¹ Nevertheless, all the 'utras, except for Šihlun, take part in the creation which is completed to satisfaction. Afterwards, the sons of Jošamin are fetched to watch over and light up the world. These ones function as planets, but are separated from them, for: "Die Söhne des Jošamin übernahmen diese (:Tibil) dann auf achtzig Jahre, hernach wollten die Söhne des Jošamin nicht mehr, da brachten sie die Planeten, von denen ein jeder sie einzeln übernahm."¹²

¹⁰ K. Rudolph, *ibid.* — Rudolph admits the two natures of, for instance, Abatur, but he does not go any deeper into the religious significance of the apparent dualism.

¹¹ M. Lidzbarski, *Das Johannesbuch*, Töpelmann/Giessen 1915, p. 215, 20.

¹² M. Lidzbarski, *ibid.*, p. 217, 11-14.

A couple of elements need some comment. First of all, the 'utras quarrel among themselves,—the 'utras are not battling against some demonic forces. The scene is rather one of a work-crew discussing and arguing at the various stages of work. Then, the world-creation done by the 'utras is a fine one,—no depreciation here. And, finally, the first lights functioning as the later planets are of heavenly origin,—only when Jošamin's sons get bored do the planets proper take over.

Must one lose one's faith in these heavenly beings busy with the creation of what is usually seen as a prison for the humans? One might,—but, on the other hand, one might take the events of the tractate at hand as a clue hinting at the dmuta-idea. While on earth, or in the realm-to-become-earth, the 'utras may be subjected to conditions, laws and rules that befall human beings. Therefore an 'utra may quarrel, may lament and weep over his state on earth. Or, in contact with the demons, who are neither humans nor 'utras, an 'utra may remain aloof and invulnerable. (One is well advised to take notice of the verb 'may' in either case). Anoš, for instance, performs miracles with great success, in the style of Jesus, in Jerusalem,¹³ but Hibil, his fellow-'utra, cries like a lost soul on earth.¹⁴

Šitil, less central than Hibil and Anoš in his role as guardian and savior, cuts a distinctly human figure in the story of his death. When Šitil dies, he comes alive in the sense that he regains his heavenly, Gnostic nature. Loosened from his ties to earthly laws, he attains a revealer's role towards his left-behind father. On earth a human, on high, a guardian. A related thought is illustrated in the description of the angel of death, Šauriel,: ““Tod” wird er in der Welt genannt, doch *Kušta* (: Truth) von den Wissenden, die um ihn wissen.”¹⁵ Death means life for the knowing ones! In the same vein, Šitil, according to his situation at a given moment, may be called Šitil 'utra or Šitil bar Adam. The earthly dmuta of Šitil, then, is not an image disconnected from his heavenly identity, on the contrary,—by juxtaposing the two, as in the *GL*—account, the logical consistency is clearly demonstrated. The two figures of Šitil become illustrations of what the idea of the image above and below might mean. Not simply a speculative excuse for how things became what they did, the dmuta depicts a living,

¹³ M. Lidzbarski, *ibid.*, p. 242ff.

¹⁴ M. Lidzbarski, *ibid.*, p. 196ff.

¹⁵ M. Lidzbarski, *GL* 1, 1, p. 425, 1-2.

flexible image, reflecting a keen understanding of how a mythological figure is able to keep his identity in different spheres. There is no change of identity, no split personality occurs,—the spatial/qualitative circumstances account for modifications in the figure's behavior and destiny.

I cannot agree, then, with Drower, who says that Šitil bar Adam is not identical with Šitil in the revealer-savior triumvirate.¹⁶ Nor do I share Lidzbarski's misgivings regarding the passage: "Es sind unsere Brüder Hibil, Šitil und Anoš, die Našoäer, die Vollkommenen, die von erprobter Gerechtigkeit, die Lohnspende und Almosen nicht vergassen, die den Bau erleuchteten, die auf der Erde Tibil, die reich an Anstößen und durchweg Mangel ist, einhergingen, dabei nicht bebten..."¹⁷ The 'utras, capable of travelling between the worlds, behave and act like pious Mandaean while on earth; Lidzbarski could not grant the 'utras an earthly aspect.

Indeed, much more than the Mandaean, it is the scholars who have tended to separate the earthly and the heavenly realm. The religious consciousness shows more elasticity than outside inquirers often allow it. A human side of the revealer as well as a more elevated aspect of the earthly human being seem to be tenets less offensive to the religious group at hand. There is no decisive separation between the image above and below. The idea of the dmuta illustrates an attempt to vitally connect the two realms. The scholarly inclination has been to view this assertion at a much too theoretical level. Practically, one ought to start seeing what the dmuta conveys in the mythological expositions, in accounts that speak markedly from the earthly viewpoint. Platonically, the upper image might remain untainted, while the lower, degraded one scurries around on earth,—and seldom would the twain meet. In the religious tradition in question, however, the atmosphere is different. Dualism is mediated in the flexibility of a given mythological personage,—in this case Šitil. The "either—or" of radical dualism is solved by the inclusive "both—and" of otherwise seemingly irreconcilable, though somehow identical, entities in Mandaeanism.

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¹⁶ E. S. Drower, *The Mandaean of Iraq and Iran*, p. 247.

¹⁷ M. Lidzbarski, *GL* 1, 1, p. 424, n. 4.

TAPAS AND PURIFICATION IN EARLY HINDUISM

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Purification plays an important role in virtually every religion. This is particularly true in Hinduism where rituals of purification are many and varied. Although these rituals may be studied from several points of view, any *historical* investigation of the issue must pay particular attention to a concept which is central to Vedic thought, namely *tapas*.

Although the Sanskrit noun *tapas* has numerous meanings in Vedic literature, the connotation of "heat" is always central. Moreover, this "heat" is frequently creative and life-generating. At the cosmogonic level the generative power of heat is already seen in Ṛg Veda X, 129 and X, 190 where *tapas* is regarded as the force behind creation itself. In the Brāhmaṇas the creator god Prajāpati invariably generates life through the practice of *tapas* or austerity.¹ At the ritual level man is spiritually reborn through the power and practice of *tapas*.² *Tapas* in the Veda is, however, not only a creative force which generates life; it is also destructive. It is a heat which injures, which causes pain, and which consumes. Although the creative and the destructive aspects of *tapas* are interrelated, it is the destructive power of *tapas* which claims our primary attention when investigating purification in Early Hinduism.

I. TAPAS, DESTRUCTION, PURIFICATION

A. *Tapas*: Destructive Heat

Among the connotations of the Sanskrit root *tap* are "to consume or destroy by heat" and "to injure [with heat]."³ Connotations of injury and consuming destruction are, in fact, the most prevalent meanings of the root *tap* and *tap*-derivatives in the Ṛg Veda. Examples in which deities are invoked to injure and destroy enemies by means

¹ See, for example, Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa II, 5, 1, 1.

² For a more complete discussion of the creative aspect of *tapas* see W. Kaelber, "Tapas, Birth and Spiritual Rebirth in the Veda," *History of Religions* 15 (1976): 343-386.

³ M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 436.

of *tapas*, *tapus*, or $\sqrt{\text{tap}}$ -action are multiple.⁴ Ṛg Veda III, 18, 2, for example, states:

Do you, Agni, injure with heat [$\sqrt{\text{tap}}$] the unfriendly among us; do you injure with heat [$\sqrt{\text{tap}}$] the ritual purpose of the grudging outsider who would do us harm; do you, the very pious, injure the impious with heat [$\sqrt{\text{tap}}$]...⁵

Ṛg Veda VI, 22, 8, a hymn to Indra, states: "Injure them [i.e. those who hate us] with that [$\sqrt{\text{tap}}$], O bull, on every side with flame..."⁶

Although a number of Ṛg Vedic deities are invoked to generate a destructive $\sqrt{\text{tap}}$ -action against enemies, it is not surprising that Agni (i.e. the god of fire and the fire itself) is called upon more than any other deity. In fact, of the thirty nine Ṛg Vedic phrases in which an injurious heat-action is taken, nineteen cite the god Agni as the agent of such action.⁷ Agni, as the fire, destroys or consumes through *tapas*. Ṛg Veda VI, 5, 4 notes: "Whatever outsider would do us harm, O Agni, ... him with your ageless flames do you injure with heat, you who have heat, O most hot (*tapā tapiṣṭha tapasā tapasvān*)." *Tapas* and $\sqrt{\text{tap}}$ -action, as this verse makes clear, are essential to Agni's very nature. He is *tapiṣṭha*, "most hot." At Ṛg Veda VIII, 3, 1 Agni is described as "heat-headed" (*tapurmūrdhā*) and at VIII, 23, 4 as "heat-toothed" (*tapurjambhasya*). Agni is a *tapasvin*, one possessed of and characterized by *tapas*. In fact, in the Brāhmaṇas Agni is often equated with *tapas*.⁸ He is himself "born of *tapas*."⁹ The $\sqrt{\text{tap}}$ -action of Agni is clearly double-edged; it may be creative warmth¹⁰ as well as

⁴ There are, in fact, thirty one verses in which "some form of the root *tap* or one of its derivatives" connote destructive heat directed against an enemy (C. Blair, *Heat in the Rīg Veda and Atharva Veda*, American Oriental Society Publication, no. 45 [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961], p. 81). The form *tapus*, for example, connotes destructive heat in eleven of the sixteen passages in which the word appears. Outside of Book Ten, this is also the most common meaning of the word *tapas*. (Blair, p. 51).

⁵ *tapo śv agne antarān amitrān*
tapā śaṁsam araruṣaḥ parasya
tapo vaso cikātāno acittān...

Blair, p. 10. Unless otherwise indicated translations from the Ṛg Veda and the Atharva Veda are taken from Blair.

⁶ *tapā vṛṣan viśvataḥ śociṣā tām*

⁷ Blair, p. 83.

⁸ See, for example, Śat. Br. III, 4, 3, 2.

⁹ Taittirīya Saṃhitā IV, 2, 11, 4.

¹⁰ See, for example, RV X, 88, 9.

destructive flame. The destructive, consuming heat of Agni is thus but one side of his *tapas*-laden and *tapas*-generating nature. His consuming heat is *itself*, however, double-edged. It is itself “creative” as well as destructive. The sacrificial victim is consumed by the *tapas* of Agni; it is “destroyed.” Yet it is simultaneously given life in heaven. This is clear at Ṛg Veda X, 16, 4 where the root *tap* must be translated as “burn up” or “consume,” as Geldner noted.¹¹ It is, however, precisely these consuming flames which bring the sacrificial victim directly to heaven as the verse makes clear.¹² It is also Agni as the cremation fire who supplies the human corpse with *tapas* and thus facilitates its ascent to heaven.¹³ Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa II, 2, 4, 8 notes that Agni as the cremation fire consumes (*√tap*) the body of the sacrificer at his funeral and thus he is born again in the heavenly world.

Although it is the god Agni who is most frequently invoked to generate a destructive *tapas*, certain hymns of the Ṛg Veda suggest that man himself may generate such a heat. On the basis of several Ṛg Vedic passages Blair has suggested that “the heat of the sacrificer himself was projected by magic off into space to strike down the enemy wherever he might be.”¹⁴ This view is further substantiated if one considers the magic-filled world of the Atharva Veda where not only a creative but also a destructive *tapas* is generated by man himself. For example, at Atharva Veda V, 18 the priest (i.e. Brahman) pursues the insulter of the gods with *tapas* and wrath (*anuhāya tapasā manyunā cota dūrād ava bhindanty enam*, verse 9). The priest’s teeth, covered with *tapas*, are used to pierce the enemy (... *dantās tapasābhidighāḥ*, verse 8).

Although a destructive *√tap*-action is generated against a variety of enemies in the Ṛg Veda¹⁵ it is most often directed against the Rakṣases, a group of demons or evil spirits. Thus, for example, at

¹¹ Blair, p. 31.

¹² *aṇo bhāgas tapasā taṁ tapasva
taṁ te śocis tapatu taṁ te arcih
yās te śivās tanvo jātavedas
tābhīr vahaiṇaṁ sukrītām u lokam*

¹³ See Blair, p. 7; AV XVIII, 4, 9; XI, 1, 4.

¹⁴ Blair, p. 7.

¹⁵ Destructive *tapas* is, for example, directed against sorcerers and false-worshippers (RV X, 87, 14) as well as against false-friends (RV X, 89, 12) and Brahman-haters (RV III, 30, 17). See also RV X, 68, 6; II, 30, 4.

Ṛg Veda II, 23, 14 the Rakṣases are injured with "sharpest heating."¹⁶ At Ṛg Veda IV, 4, 1 Agni is asked to "pierce the Rakṣases with most hot (flames)," ¹⁷ and at Ṛg Veda VIII, 23, 14 Agni is again invoked to burn down these guilful demons with *tapas*.¹⁸ Examples of a destructive √*tap*-action against the Rakṣases can also be found in the Atharva Veda. At VI, 32, 1 and XIII, 3, 43 Agni is requested to injure the demons with his burning *tapas*.

B. *Tapas*, Destruction, Purification

The hymns of the Ṛg Veda, essentially concerned with praising specific deities, are not concerned with elaborating upon the exact relation between the demonic Rakṣases and the sacrificial performance. Unquestionably, however, these demons were perceived to be a constant threat to the ritual. More significantly, the hymns do not detail the consequences of dispelling, injuring, or destroying the Rakṣases. In the ritual literature which follows the Ṛg Veda, however, these consequences become explicit. Simply stated, the expulsion of the Rakṣases is directly correlated with external purification of sacrificial objects and relatedly with the purification of the sacrificial procedure itself. In short, to overcome the Rakṣases is to purify; and unless purification takes place the sacrifice cannot succeed.¹⁹ The correlation between expelling these demons and purification is particularly clear at the New and Full Moon Sacrifices. During the purifying consecration preceding the sacrifice the sacrificer receives a black antelope skin. This skin significantly symbolizes the sacrifice itself.²⁰ The antelope skin must, however, be shaken for the explicit purpose of driving off the Rakṣases which are clearly equated here with impurity, *a-medhya*.²¹

It is important to note that the means of effecting external purification is very often a destructive *tapas*. Taittirīya Saṃhitā V, 1, 11, (1) notes that Agni, "waxing with *tapas*," guards the sacrifice. This he

¹⁶ *tejīṣṭhaya tāpanī rakṣasas tapa*
ye tvā nide dadhire dṛṣṭavīryam

¹⁷ *vidhya rakṣasas tapiṣṭhaiḥ*.

¹⁸ *nī māyīnas tapuṣa rakṣaso daha*

¹⁹ See, for example, Sat. Br. III, 1, 3, 13-18; V, 3, 5, 16.

²⁰ Sat. Br. I, 1, 4, 1. Unless otherwise indicated translations from this text are taken from J. Eggeling, trans., *The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Sacred Books of the East, 5 vols. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1964). In all translated passages from primary sources the word *tapas* has been left untranslated.

²¹ Sat. Br. I, 1, 4, 4.

invariably does through a destructive *tapas*, “burning out” or “scorching” the demons.²² The ritual objects are heated to simultaneously destroy the Rakṣases and purify these implements. The ladel and winnowing basket used at the sacrifice are, for example, heated with fire as is the dipping spoon in order to “burn out” the demons.²³ The rite of *paryagnikarāṇa* (i.e. the rite of carrying Agni around an object) is performed for purposes of purification. It renders a ritual object *medhya*, sacrificially pure.²⁴ As a Brāhmaṇa passage makes clear, however, this purification is correlated with an overcoming of the Rakṣases:

He now carries fire round it. By this he encloses it [i.e. the object to be purified] with an unbroken fence, lest the evil spirits, the Rakṣases, should seize upon it; for Agni is the repeller of the Rakṣases: this is the reason why he carries fire round it.²⁵

Paradigmatically, the gods at the *Avāntaradīkṣa*, a ritual of purification, assume the form of Agni, the lord of *tapas* (i.e. *tapaspati*): “‘He verily is the greatest repeller of the Rakṣases among us; let us be like him’... They accordingly became like Agni and thereby escaped from the Rakṣases.”²⁶ This repelling of the Rakṣases is explicitly correlated with the process of purification.

Destructive *tapas* is thus correlated in the ritual literature with *external* purification of ritual objects. To drive away and destroy the Rakṣases is to purify ($\sqrt{pū}$) and render an object “pure” or “fit for a sacrifice” (i.e. *medhya*). Significantly, however, *tapas* comes to be seen as a means of purifying even when the threatening presence of the Rakṣases is no longer mentioned. The destructive heat of the fire purifies directly. The Dharma Sūtras, for example, when they speak of purification at sacrifices often note that objects are cleansed of

²² VS I, 7.

²³ R. Griffith, trans., *The White Yajur Veda* (Banaras: E. J. Lazarus, 1957), p. 3 n. Unless otherwise indicated all translations from the Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā are taken from this source. Translations from the Taittirīya Saṃhitā are taken from A. B. Keith, trans., *The Veda of the Black Yajus School Entitled Taittirīya Saṃhitā*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1914). The words *tapas* and *dīkṣā* have been left untranslated.

²⁴ See G. V. Devasthali, *Religion and Mythology of the Brāhmaṇas* (Poona: University of Poona, 1965), pps. 86-87.

²⁵ Śat. Br. I, 2, 2, 13.

²⁶ Śat. Br. III, 4, 3, 8.

impurity by being exposed to the flame of Agni and burned.²⁷ At this later stage of Vedic thought emphasis on purity increases whereas emphasis on the correlated expulsion of the Rakṣases decreases.

The destructive *tapas* of Agni purifies not only sacrificial objects, however. More and more Agni is regarded as capable of purifying the sacrificer himself. In this context we need not speak any longer of an external purification, which may be easily correlated with overcoming the Rakṣases, but may speak of a more psychological or internal purification. Agni destroys or removes not simply the evil demons but evil itself. Thus, for example, at Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā V, 36 Agni as *tapaspati*, as the lord of *tapas*, is asked to remove *our* evil or “sin” (i.e. *pāpman*). Agni is capable of purifying the sacrificer because he himself is inherently pure. As early as Ṛg Veda III, 1, 5 Agni was described as purifying by purification.²⁸ At Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā XXVI, 9 he is described as *pavamāna*, “self-pure” and “purifying.” At Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa II, 2, 1, 6 Agni Pavamāna purifies the sacrificer.²⁹ Relatedly, at Ṛg Veda X, 16, 4-5 Agni is implored to remove the stains of evil deeds. His flames of heat are both pure and purifying.³⁰

It is noteworthy, however, that references to Agni in the context of purification become progressively more symbolic and figurative. It is *tapas* of and in itself which comes to be seen as the power of purification. Just as the expulsion of the Rakṣases becomes less significant in the purifying process, so too does Agni as a literal, personified and external force become less significant in the same context. Only the imagery of fire remains when the later law book of Manu, for example, notes that: “Whatever evil [i.e. *enas*] men commit by thoughts, words, or deeds, that they speedily *burn away by tapas*.”³¹ Relatedly, a legal text notes that “as cotton and reeds thrown into a fire blaze up, even so all guilt is *consumed* [√*tap*].”³²

Although there are, as noted above, references in both the Ṛg Veda

²⁷ See, for example, Baudhāyana Dharma Śāstra I, 6, 14, 1.

²⁸ *kratum pumānaḥ kavibhiḥ pavitraiḥ*.

²⁹ See also Taittirīya Saṃhitā IV, 6, 1.

³⁰ Taitt. Saṃ. I, 3, 14, (2).

³¹ Manu XI, 242. Unless otherwise indicated translations from this text are taken from G. Bühler, trans., *The Laws of Manu*, Sacred Books of the East, vol. 25 (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1964). The word *tapas* has been left untranslated.

³² or “burnt up,” destroyed.

and the Atharva Veda to man himself being able to generate a destructive *tapas*, such destructive heat—placed at the service of purification—was most frequently generated by the gods, particularly Agni, *on behalf of man*. This is particularly the case as regards the external purification of sacrificial objects. As emphasis progressively shifts, however, toward the ritual purification of the individual a corresponding emphasis is placed upon man himself being able to generate a destructive *tapas* within himself for purposes of “consuming” his own impurity. *Tapas* then comes to assume its most prevalent meaning: self-imposed austerity, asceticism, mortification, or penance. To fully understand how this occurred, however, we must briefly return to the Ṛg Veda to consider a rather different connotation of \sqrt{tap} and *tapas*.

C. *Tapas*: Undesirable Pain

Among the connotations of the root *tap* is “to suffer or feel pain.”³³ This is often the case in the Ṛg Veda. Relatedly, the word *tapas* must frequently be translated as “pain” or “suffering.”³⁴ In both the Ṛg Veda and the Atharva Veda such pain is most certainly undesirable as well as unpleasant. Such suffering may be either physical or mental. It may, for example, be the heat of disease in the body. At Atharva Veda VI, 20, 1 fever is characterized as “heat-weaponed” (*tapurvadhāya namo astu takhmane*). Significantly, the heat may also refer to hunger. Ṛg Veda I, 105, 8 (a) and (b) reads:

sam mā tapanty abhitaḥ
sapatnīr iva parśavaḥ

Bloomfield translated these lines: “My ribs pain [\sqrt{tap}] me all about as co-wives plague (their husbands).”³⁵ Blair has translated them: “My ribs heat me excessively [\sqrt{tap}] on all sides as co-wives (make miserable their husband),” noting perceptively that this “misery of the ribs” refers to hunger.³⁶

The pain of heat within the body may also be somewhat more psychological. As Blair has noted: “There are a comparatively large

³³ Monier-Williams, p. 436.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 437.

³⁵ Cited in Blair, p. 29, 107.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 107.

number of passages [in the Ṛg Veda and Atharva Veda] in which an emotion of strong unhappiness is considered to be heat or flame in the body, particularly in the heart.”³⁷ He further notes that such unhappiness when it resides in the heart “is about equivalent to ‘heart-ache.’” It is an “excessive heat of the body like jealousy and fever, to which it is closely related.”³⁸ It is instructive to consider in this context the “Gambler’s Hymn,” Ṛg Veda X, 34. In verse 10: “The gambler’s wife, left alone [or lost by her husband in gambling³⁹] is pained [\sqrt{tap}] (with misery).”⁴⁰ In verse 11: “It pained [\sqrt{tap}] the gambler (with remorse or jealousy) to see the woman, the wife of others and the well-arranged home.”⁴¹ In verse 7 of the same hymn the words *tapānās*, “heating,” and *tāpayiṣṇavas*, “causing great heat,” are applied to the dice, they no doubt being the cause of all this pain. At verse 9 the gambler complains that these dice “burn out my heart (with anguish).” Examples of heat as undesirable pain may also be found in the Atharva Veda. At II, 35, 2 the individual who has made an error in the sacrificial procedure is “heated with anguish.” At Atharva Veda XVI, 3, 6 the sacrificer prays that his heart may be “free from excessive heating” (*asaṃtāpaṃ me hrdayam*). Atharva Veda XIX, 28, 2 speaks of an unpleasant heat [\sqrt{tap}] produced in the mind [*manas*] and Atharva Veda XIX, 30, 4 and XIX, 28, 1-2 speak of an unpleasant heating or pain [\sqrt{tap}] in the heart.

The heat or *tapas* illustrated above is clearly undesirable. As either hunger, jealousy, or anguish it is a pain which is neither desirable nor self-induced. It is not a pain which is voluntarily generated by man. We may, as a consequence, conclude, in agreement with Blair, that this undesirable heat within the body or mind is “not to be confused with devotional heat.”⁴² The *tapas* or \sqrt{tap} -action just discussed bears no relation to a desirable religious activity. Because it is a strictly undesirable and involuntary pain it can neither be regarded nor translated as “austerity,” “asceticism,” “mortification,” or “penance.” Although this pain of *tapas* is experienced within man it is not self-

³⁷ Ibid., p. 106.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 29 n.

⁴⁰ *jāyā tapyate kitavasya hīnā...*

⁴¹ *striyaṃ dṛṣṭvāya kitavaṃ tatāpa anyeṣāṃ jāyāṃ sukrtaṃ ca yonim.*

⁴² Blair, p. 8.

generated for purposes of knowledge, merit, purification or any other religiously desirable end.

Most connotations of *tapas* and $\sqrt{\text{tap}}$ -action found in the Ṛg Veda refer then to either a destructive heat or a painful heat. These connotations of *tapas*, although capable of overlapping, must be differentiated from each other. Pain, however, can be self-imposed. *Tapas*, in other words, may quite obviously be self-generated. If we then reconsider those two early meanings of *tapas* with which we have dealt, namely destructive heat and the heat of pain, one question becomes virtually unavoidable: Cannot *tapas* as the heat of a *self-imposed* pain "burn out," "consume," and destroy evil forces, evil, and ultimately impurity? Simply stated, cannot *tapas*, as self-imposed mortification, effect purification? The ritual literature to which we now turn suggests that this question be answered affirmatively.

II. *TAPAS*, ASCETICISM, PURIFICATION

The Brāhmaṇas, as part of their extensive description and explanation regarding the nature and significance of the sacrifice, lay heavy emphasis upon the need for purification. More specifically, the purification [$\sqrt{\text{pū}}$] of the sacrificer himself is crucial. Although actions calculated to purify and retain purity accompany the entire sacrificial scenario, it is at the *Dīkṣā*, an elaborate and prolonged "consecration" to the sacrifice, that the purity of the sacrificer is most evidently and comprehensively brought about. For this reason the *Dīkṣā* stands at the very beginning of the ritual process. Man is impure (*amedhya*) yet must become pure (*medhya*) in order to perform the sacrifice.⁴³ At the *Dīkṣā* this transition from impure to pure is effected; at the *Dīkṣā* man is purified (*pāvayati*)⁴⁴ and becomes "fit for a sacrifice" (*medhya*).⁴⁵ Taittirīya Saṃhitā VI, 1, 2, 1 notes in this context: "All the gods who purified themselves for the sacrifice waxed great. He who knowing thus purifies himself for the sacrifice waxes great." Thus the sacrificer is lead "foreward, purified, to the world of the gods."

Purification at the *Dīkṣā* is attained essentially through *tapas*. As early as the Atharva Veda the terms *dīkṣā* and *tapas* were frequently

⁴³ Śat. Br. III, 1, 3, 18; III, 1, 2, 8; III, 1, 2, 2.

⁴⁴ Śat. Br. III, 1, 3, 18.

⁴⁵ Taitt. Saṃ. VI, 1, 1, 2.

combined. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa III, 4, 3, 2, in fact, explicitly equates the two. At the *Dikṣā* the sacrificer receives a garment. "He puts it round him, with the text, 'Thou art the covering [or form, *tanu*] of *dikṣā* and *tapas*.'" ⁴⁶ Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā IV, 2 states that at the *Dikṣā* the *dikṣita* (i.e. he who undergoes the *Dikṣā*) rises up from the waters purified. He then addresses these waters as "the form of *dikṣā* and *tapas*." These waters, as Griffith noted, remove impurity. ⁴⁷ Not only are the two words frequently paired, ⁴⁸ but even more significantly, the *Dikṣā* came into being through *tapas* at the cosmogonic or paradigmatic level: "Prajāpati toiled and practiced *tapas*. From the body of him, when wearied and heated [\sqrt{tap}]... the *Dikṣā* was produced." ⁴⁹ Relatedly, waters used to purify are described as "born of *tapas*." ⁵⁰ Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra X, 6, 5 notes that the sacrificer grasps the *Dikṣā* with *tapas*. It is thus through *tapas* that the *Dikṣā* and hence ritual purification come into being.

The word *tapas* as used above must be translated as asceticism, as self-imposed austerity. This is, in fact, the most prevalent meaning of *tapas* in the Brāhmaṇas. The meaning of *tapas* as ascetic effort may be clearly seen in its repeated correlation with the root *śram*, "to toil," "to weary one's self," "to exert one's self." ⁵¹ Just as Prajāpati exerted himself to become pure and cleanse himself of impurity, ⁵² so at the *Dikṣā* the sacrificer exerts himself through asceticism, through *tapas*, to become pure. Further, the *dikṣita*, through his self-imposed "mortification," ⁵³ his self-imposed "suffering" and pain, generates an inner heat. This inner heat is also referred to as *tapas*. Through the heat of exertion, asceticism, mortification and pain he generates a heat (*tapas*) which raises him above the impure human condition, enabling him to perform the sacrifice. It is, I believe, in part because the word *tapas*, as early as the Ṛg Veda, had had the connotation of pain that this very word could now so easily be applied to that self-generated pain and

⁴⁶ Śat. Br. II, 1, 2, 20. See also Taitt. Saṃ. VI, 1, 1, 2 where *tapas* and *dikṣā* purify the sacrificer.

⁴⁷ Griffith, p. 30 n.

⁴⁸ See also, for example, AV XIX, 41; XIX, 43; IX, 1, 1.

⁴⁹ Śat. Br. XIII, 1, 7, 1.

⁵⁰ Śat. Br. V, 3, 5, 16.

⁵¹ See, for example, Śat. Br. IX, 5, 1, 2-9; XIII, 1, 7, 1; XI, 4, 3, 1; II, 5, 1, 1.

⁵² Śat. Br. X, 4, 4, 3.

⁵³ See Monier-Williams, p. 437.

mortification which is synonymous with ascetic activity. The meaning of *tapas* as asceticism, as mortification, as self-imposed pain, found so frequently in the Brāhmaṇas and later, hence remains transparent to its “earlier”⁵⁴ meaning of undesirable pain experienced within the body. *Tapas* as a pain once undesirable and religiously insignificant “becomes”⁵⁴ *tapas* as religiously significant and necessary “pain.” The “old”⁵⁴ meaning of *tapas* has not passed away. It has rather been reinterpreted.⁵⁵

Not only is the word *tapas* (meaning asceticism) transparent to the earlier meaning of painful heat, however; it is also transparent to the early connotation of destructive heat. At the *Dikṣā* the “human” condition, the sacrificer’s impure condition, is overcome. More specifically and graphically, it is “consumed” or “burnt out” ($\sqrt{\text{tap}}$) in the heat (*tapas*) of asceticism. Strictly speaking, man as man cannot perform the sacrifice. Only a god can do so. It is for this reason that man must put off his human form and assume a divine form at the *Dikṣā*. As the texts repeatedly note: “What is human is inauspicious at the sacrifice.”⁵⁶ The consecration preceding the New and Full Moon Sacrifice, which structurally fulfills the same purpose as the *Dikṣā* preceding the Soma sacrifice, is also characterized by asceticism. In this context, Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa I, 1, 1, 6 makes it clear that “in entering upon the vow [of asceticism] he becomes, as it were non-human.” At the *Dikṣā* itself, Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa III, 1, 1, 8 notes: “He who is consecrated... becomes one of the deities.”⁵⁷ This transition from the human state to the divine is explicitly correlated with the transition from the impure to the pure.⁵⁸ Because the human body is impure, a pure = divine body (i.e. *devatāśarīra*) is necessary.⁵⁹ The human body because it is impure must be symbolically consumed through the heat of asceticism in order

⁵⁴ We speak here structurally and not necessarily chronologically.

⁵⁵ It must, of course, be realized that the generation of “magical” heat within the body is in many ways an archaic and universal practice, as Eliade has often noted. (See, for example, M. Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* [New York: Pantheon Books, 1958], pps. 331-332, 337.) These archaic beliefs and practices can by no means be excluded as a contributing factor in the development of Vedic speculation regarding *tapas*. I have merely considered the issue from a different point of view.

⁵⁶ Śat. Br. I, 4, 1, 35; I, 7, 2, 9; I, 8, 1, 29, etc.

⁵⁷ See also Śat. Br. III, 1, 1, 9.

⁵⁸ Śat. Br. I, 1, 1, 4.

⁵⁹ See Eggeling, part I, p. 4 n.

that a requisite purity—correlated with a divine state—may be attained.⁶⁰ Once again, the word *tapas* (as asceticism) can easily convey this sense of a symbolic “consuming” of the “human” body precisely because of its “earlier” meaning of a destructive heat which consumes in the literal sense. Quite graphically, Taittirīya Saṃhitā VII, 4, 9, 1 notes that “one kindles oneself with the *Dikṣā*.” As Gonda notes in this context: “Being kindled through the *Dikṣā*, [the body] is enveloped by flames.”⁶¹ During the *Dikṣā* the sacrificer also offers a libation into the fire. This sacrificial offering is the symbolic equivalent of the sacrificer himself, as the texts make clear.⁶² Taittirīya Saṃhitā VI, 1, 4, 5 also notes that the *dikṣita* who practices *tapas* is a sacrificial oblation to the gods.

At the *Dikṣā*, then, the sacrificer symbolically leaves the human realm and attains the realm of the gods so that, as a god, he may perform the sacrifice. There is then a direct correlation between his symbolic death to the impure human condition and his symbolically attaining a heavenly realm. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa X, 4, 4, 4 notes that he who practices *tapas* will enter the heavenly world. Once again, the ascetic heat which effects this transition is transparent to the “earlier,” more literal notion of the destructive *tapas* of the fire (i.e. Agni) consuming the body and thereby transporting it to the heavenly realm and granting it life. We noted above how the funeral fire’s destructive *tapas* is “double-edged” in this regard. In very much the same way Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa II, 2, 4, 8 notes: “And when he dies, and when they place him on the fire, then he is born (again) out of the fire, and the fire only consumes [\sqrt{tap}] his body.” At the *Dikṣā*, however, both the death and the rebirth are symbolic. He is consumed and reborn through his own self-generated heat of asceticism. Taittirīya Saṃhitā VI, 2, 5, 1 notes that one is truly born (i.e. spiritually reborn) only when “full of *tapas*.” Here again a more symbolic meaning has “replaced,” yet remains transparent to, a more literal meaning.

The word *tapas* (as asceticism) thus contains within it and combines the “earlier” and more literal connotations of both destructive heat

⁶⁰ Eggeling has noted in this regard that “the human body [i.e. the impure body] of the sacrificer is mystically consumed and a new divine body prepared.” (Eggeling, part I, p. 4 n.).

⁶¹ J. Gonda, *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1965), p. 338.

⁶² Śat. Br. III, 1, 4, 23.

and painful heat.⁶³ Because pain is now self-generated through “mortification,” the destructive power of *tapas* is also self-generated. That destructive heat once generated by Agni outside of man and on behalf of man is now generated by and within man himself. This is in part made possible by the fact that man becomes a god at the *Dikṣā*. The mantras at the rite make it clear that the *dikṣita* exchanges persons with and becomes the god Agni.⁶⁴ Taittirīya Saṃhitā I, 2, 11, (d) notes: “Agni, this body (or form, *tanu*) of mine be in thee; that body (or form, *tanu*) of thine be in me.”⁶⁵ In this context, however, it is precisely *tapas* which constitutes the “form” or “body” of Agni, for he is declared to be *tapaspati*, the lord of *tapas*. It is thus the *tapas* of the *dikṣita* himself which is crucial. As a consequence he may declare at the *Dikṣā* that he purifies himself.⁶⁶

In the form of Agni the *dikṣita* fasts. Fasting is, of course, the practice of *tapas*: “For *tapas* it is when one abstains from food.”⁶⁷ The *dikṣita* experiences hunger. “His food consists of the [hot] fast-milk only.”⁶⁸ “For *tapas* it is when [one] lives on fast-milk only.”⁶⁹ Once again a transparency to a Ṛg Vedic connotation of *tapas* is evident. There the unwanted pain of hunger was rendered by the root

⁶³ No doubt a major reason why the word *tapas* is able to convey the rather subjective and abstract meaning of ascetic heat—as well as being able to combine within that meaning connotations of destructive heat and painful heat—is found in the rather ambiguous connotations of the word in its earliest appearances. By way of contrast, the root *dah*, “to burn,” has a very concrete meaning in the Ṛg Veda. It not only burns but “leaves a black trail” (Blair, p. 89). Its destructive effect can be objectively observed. Relatedly, the word *śocis*, meaning flame and the light of a flame in the Ṛg Veda, is also quite concrete. As Blair notes, however, “the heating effect of √*tap* is subjective and abstract. The burning effect of the root *dah* and the lighting effect of *śocis* are clearly seen; but the heat of *tap* is felt only subjectively” (Ibid.). Not only are the connotations of destructive heat often abstract and ambiguous, however; the connotations of undesirable pain found in the Ṛg Veda and the Atharva Veda are also frequently ambiguous and abstract. Sometimes the painful heat is in the body (e.g. RV I, 105, 8); sometimes in the heart (e.g. AV XVI, 3, 6) sometimes in the mind (e.g. AV XIX, 28, 2); and sometimes the modern reader cannot at all be certain what type of pain is involved.

⁶⁴ See Griffith, p. 40 n. The ceremony is known as the *Tānūnaptra*.

⁶⁵ = Vāj. Saṃ. V, 6: “O Agni, Whatever form there is of thine, may that same form be here on me.”

⁶⁶ Taitt. Saṃ. I, 2, 1, (1).

⁶⁷ Śat. Br. IV, 5, 1, 6 & 9.

⁶⁸ Śat. Br. III, 1, 2, 1.

⁶⁹ Śat. Br. IX, 5, 1, 2.

tap. Here the self-imposed hunger is the *tapas* of a fast, of ascetic practice. Again “pain” is linked with “destruction.” For example, during the *Upasads*, which form part of the purifying preparation for the building of the fire altar (i.e. Agnicayana), the sacrificer fasts.⁷⁰ The *Upasads* or “ascetic sieges” are, in fact, explicitly equated with both *tapas* and fasting.⁷¹ During the fast the sacrificer’s human and impure body is progressively diminished; it is consumed, so to speak, in the heat of *tapas* as a divine body is “built up” in the form of the altar itself which is symbolically equated with the sacrificer. Taittiriya Saṃhitā VII, 4, 9, 1 notes in this context that the sacrificer “cooks” himself with the *Upasads*. Progressively, the fasting destroys the hair, then the skin, then the blood, then the flesh, then the bones, then the marrow.⁷² The self is hence sacrificed and thereby one goes to the world of heaven.⁷³ By means of his fast, his *tapas*, the sacrificer not only “cleanses and purifies the sacrificial vessels,” he also “purifies himself within.”⁷⁴ Fast-food explicitly purifies,⁷⁵ and Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra X, 14, 10 observes that when the *dīkṣita* becomes lean, when there is no food left in him, when nothing separates his skin and his bones then he is *medhya*, pure.

III. TAPAS, PENANCE, PURIFICATION

A. *Tapas*: Ritual Asceticism or Penance?

As noted, at the *Dikṣā* man purifies himself through *tapas*, through ascetic activity. He overcomes or destroys his impure condition, moving from the impure to the pure. This transition is correlated with symbolically overcoming the human condition, attaining the heavenly world and becoming divine.⁷⁶ Although the Brāhmaṇas often note that “what is human is inauspicious at the sacrifice,” they, in general, stress not so much the negative and undesirable aspects of the human condition but rather the positive and desirable aspects of a “divine” condition.⁷⁷ There are, however, limited but very definite references

⁷⁰ Śat. Br. III, 4, 4, 27.

⁷¹ Śat. Br. X, 2, 5, 3.

⁷² Taitt. Saṃ. VII, 4, 9, 1.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Taitt. Saṃ. VII, 2, 10, 3-4.

⁷⁵ Taitt. Saṃ. V, 2, 9, 3; VI, 5, 6, 4.

⁷⁶ This transition also takes place at other points in the ritual scenario.

⁷⁷ There are, in fact, continual references in the Brāhmaṇas to the fact that the human condition is necessary and desirable.

to the fact that the human condition—man's given condition per se—is evil. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa XI, 2, 6, 13, when speaking of the ritual creation of a new, divine body for man, notes that: "Even as a snake frees itself from its skin, so does he free himself from his mortal body, from *pāpman*." The presence of the word *pāpman*, here used to characterize man's mortal state, is significant. The connotation of evil is unavoidable. In symbolically freeing one's self from the mortal, human, and impure body one is thus simultaneously delivered from something evil. Relatedly, *tapas*, because it purifies, has the power to eliminate or destroy such evil. This is explicit at Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa X, 4, 4, 1-3. The passages speak of Prajāpati, the major paradigm in the Brāhmaṇas for all human activity. Prajāpati was overcome by *pāpman*, by evil, here again equated with mortality. He thus "practiced *tapas* for a thousand years, striving to leave evil [i.e. *pāpman*] behind him."⁷⁸ After practicing *tapas* for one thousand years "he cleansed himself" or purified himself ($\sqrt{pū}$) of that evil.⁷⁹ This being purified of evil is directly correlated with attaining the heavenly world. The next passage notes that one who practices *tapas* "shall share in the world of heaven"⁸⁰ as did Prajāpati.⁸¹

Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa VIII, 4, 2, 2 and other passages note that the gods themselves were at first mortal and therefore subject to the evil of death. Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa III, 12, 3, 1 states: "The gods gained their divine rank through *tapas*."⁸² "Filled with *tapas*" they entered a "sacrificial session"⁸³ and thus drove out evil (i.e. *pāpman*) and were born again.⁸⁴ The gods are thus a model for man: "And in like manner" will the sacrificer now, entering a sacrificial session filled with *tapas*, "drive out evil and be born again."⁸⁵ Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa IV, 6, 9, 12-13 in this context again correlates the overcoming of evil with attaining heaven and then notes: "Even as a snake frees itself from its skin, so do they [i.e. the sacrificers] free themselves from all evil."

⁷⁸ Śat. Br. X, 4, 4, 1.

⁷⁹ Śat. Br. X, 4, 4, 3.

⁸⁰ Śat. Br. X, 4, 4, 4.

⁸¹ Maitrī Upaniṣad IV, 4 relatively notes that man frees himself from *pāpman* through the practice of *tapas*.

⁸² See Eliade, p. 111.

⁸³ Śat. Br. VIII, 6, 3, 18.

⁸⁴ Śat. Br. IV, 6, 8, 18.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

The evil or *pāpman* to which we have made reference in the previous passages refers not to a specific act, a particular transgression, or a crime. It refers, as noted, to one's given, mortal condition per se. It is perhaps appropriate then to raise the question of whether the word *tapas*, as it has been used here and in section II above, may be translated as "penance." Eggeling, Keith, Griffith, Hume and others have very frequently translated the word in this way when it appears in a ritual context. This is, however, misleading. The word penance, as dictionary definitions make clear, is appropriately used if one refers to an act of mortification consequent upon and calculated to in some way *atone* for a specific evil act, a particular transgression, or a crime. In the ritual context of the Brāhmaṇas, however, emphasis is placed upon overcoming man's given condition per se. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa VIII, 3, 1, 12 notes that man, "being born in this world, is really intended to be born in the heavenly world." *Tapas* then, as asceticism, enables one to rise from a given condition to a clearly positive, specifically a divine condition. It is, however, largely because *tapas* had been regarded as a primary means of ritual purification that it progressively becomes the essential means of atoning for specific transgressions or acts of evil.

There is then a distinction between *tapas* as asceticism employed as a means of ritual purification for purposes of overcoming the human condition per se and *tapas* as penance which atones for specific transgressions. The *Avāntaradīkṣā*, or intermediary consecration, described in the Brāhmaṇas, provides an excellent illustration of how *tapas* functions in these two distinct ways. After the *Dīkṣā* yet before the Soma sacrifice discord arose between the gods. "They desired an *atonement* for having spoken evil [i.e. *pāpman*] to one another."⁸⁶ Here a specific act is characterized as *pāpman* and atonement is necessary. The text notes:

By means of fire they enveloped (the body) with a skin. Now, fire being *tapas*, and the *Dīkṣā* being *tapas*, they thereby underwent an intermediate consecration; and because they underwent that intermediate consecration, therefore this intermediate consecration (is performed [by man]) ... And [therefore] so does he [i.e. the sacrificer] thereby *make atonement* for what heretofore he has done injurious to the vow [of asceticism, i.e. *tapas*].⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Śat. Br. III, 4, 3, 1.

⁸⁷ Śat. Br. III, 4, 3, 2; italics mine.

Having atoned through *tapas* for a violation of his ascetic vow, he then reaffirms his commitment to that vow and redoubles his ascetic behavior (i.e. *tapas*).⁸⁸ *Tapas* as a means of penance atones for the neglect of *tapas* as a ritual asceticism. These two functions of *tapas*, although interrelated here, are nonetheless structurally distinct.

B. *Tapas* as Penance

As noted, it is largely because *tapas* had been regarded as a primary means of ritual purification that it progressively becomes the essential means of atoning for specific transgressions. This shift in emphasis can be clearly seen by comparing the Brāhmaṇas with the later “legal” literature. There is a great emphasis in this later literature upon cataloging specific crimes or moral transgressions, upon noting the impurity resulting from such transgressions, upon cataloging appropriate penances which enable one to atone for such specific “sins” (i.e. *pāpman*, *pāpa*, *enas*), and upon the resultant purification which such penances provide. Manus notes in this regard that “a man who omits a prescribed act, or performs a blamable act... must perform an [expiatory] penance [i.e. *prāyaścitta*].”⁸⁹ He notes also that “penances must always be performed for the sake of purification [i.e. *vi-√śudh*].”⁹⁰ Manus XI, 103 makes it clear that penances atone for and remove the guilt or evil [*enas*] incurred by committing specific transgressions.

Relatedly, *tapas*, no doubt because of its long ritual association with purification, becomes the primary means of atoning for such evil acts and removing impurity. *Tapas* becomes the primary means of penance [i.e. *prāyaścitta*] to such an extent that it and penance become virtually synonymous. Manus XI, 102, which virtually equates *tapas* and penance, notes that *tapas* removes or destroys the guilt or evil incurred as a consequence of immoral acts.⁹¹ Manus notes also that man effaces or destroys his “sins” by *tapas* (IV, 107), and that the individual soul (*bhūtātman*) is cleansed or purified [*√śudh*] by *tapas* (V, 109). Manus XI, 240 states: “Both those who have committed mortal sins (*mahāpātaka*) and all other offences are freed from their guilt or evil [*enas*] by means of well-performed *tapas*.” Gautama Dharma Sūtra

⁸⁸ Śat. Br. III, 4, 3, 9.

⁸⁹ Manus XI, 44.

⁹⁰ Manus XI, 54.

⁹¹ See also Manus XI, 194; XI, 228; XI, 243; XII, 104.

XXIII, 27 states: "For abuse, speaking an untruth, and doing injury, (one shall practice) *tapas* for... a period of three (days and) nights." Such illustrations from the legal literature could be easily multiplied.

Once again, *tapas* as purifying penance remains transparent to perhaps its "earliest" ⁹² meaning, the fire's destructive heat. Manu XI, 242 states: "Whatever 'sin' [*enas*] men commit by thoughts, words, or deeds, that they speedily *burn away* [destroy, consume, *nir-√dah*] by *tapas*." The use of fire imagery in the context of purifying penances is, in fact, striking. The Dharma Śāstra of Vasiṣṭha (XXVII, 1) notes: "If a hundred improper acts, and even more, have been committed, ... the *fire* of the Vedas destroys all (the guilt) of that man just as a (common) fire *consumes* fuel." This imagery is continued in the next passage: "As a fire that burns strongly consumes even green trees, even so the fire of the Veda destroys one's guilt caused by (evil) deeds." Manu XI, 247 states: "As a fire in one moment consumes [burns up or destroys, *nir-√dah*] with its bright flame the fuel that has been placed on it, even so he who knows the Veda destroys all guilt [or evil, *pāpa*] by the fire of knowledge." ⁹³

We noted above that as part of his ritual purification the *dikṣita* sacrifices an oblation into the fire. The oblation, which is explicitly equated with the sacrificer himself, thus symbolizes the destruction of his given and impure condition. A similar symbolic act is described in the legal literature for purposes of destroying the guilt or evil incurred from specific transgressions. Gautama Dharma Sūtra XXIV, 6, for example, notes that, as part of a penance for killing a Brahmin, the transgressor shall daily offer eight oblations into the fire. These oblations which are consumed symbolize respectively the hair, the nails, the skin, the flesh, the blood, the sinews, the bones, and the marrow of the transgressor himself.

As in the Brāhmaṇas, the destructive connotation of *tapas* is often

⁹² We speak here structurally and not necessarily chronologically.

⁹³ One of the most prevalent words used to indicate purity in this legal literature is *śuci*, which simultaneously means "flaming," again clearly suggesting a transparency to the fire. Unless otherwise indicated all translations from the Dharma Sūtras are taken from G. Bühler, trans., *The Sacred Laws of the Āryas*, Sacred Books of the East, 2 vols. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1965). All translations from Viṣṇu are taken from J. Jolly, trans., *The Institutes of Viṣṇu*, Sacred Books of the East (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1965). The word *tapas* has been left untranslated.

combined with the other “early” connotation of *tapas*, namely pain. Once again, this pain, as in the Brāhmaṇas, is a self-imposed, religiously necessary mortification. Note, for example, the Dharma Śāstra of Vasiṣṭha XX, 47: “A sinner is liberated from guilt by *tormenting* his body, by *tapas*...” *Tapas* is thus a self-imposed *pain* which *destroys* or consumes “sin,” evil, guilt, and impurity. It is significant to note, however, that unlike the Brāhmaṇas such purification through *tapas* is no longer correlated with symbolically attaining a divine condition. It is rather correlated in the legal literature with attaining—or better, regaining—a purified human condition.

C. Specific Forms of Penance

According to the Brāhmaṇas, the sacrificer was obligated to perform particular ascetic acts or observe particular ascetic restraints in order to generate *tapas*, thus overcoming his impure human condition. In the later legal literature many of these older practices remain crucial. Their purpose is, however, altered. They are now performed specifically as penance (i.e. *prāyaścitta*), as atonement for specific transgressions. Among the most significant of these atoning practices are fasting, *prāṇāyāma* (i.e. holding or regulating one’s breath), and *svādhyāya* (i.e. recitation of the Veda).

The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, in a ritual context, noted that fasting is a form of *tapas*,⁹⁴ and the *dīkṣita*, as part of the purifying consecration, was obliged to live for prolonged periods of time on “fast-milk” alone.⁹⁵ Fasting, as noted above, was also essential at the *Upasads* or ascetic “sieges” which the sacrificer was obligated to perform.⁹⁶ Again he lived for twelve days only on the “fast-milk,” a restraint equated with *tapas*.⁹⁷ During the fast the sacrificer’s human body was symbolically diminished or consumed in the heat of asceticism. The fasting symbolically destroys the hair, then the skin, then the blood, then the flesh, then the bones, then the marrow.⁹⁸ The legal literature continues to equate fasting with *tapas*,⁹⁹ and prescribes it frequently

⁹⁴ Śat. Br. IX, 5, 1, 6 & 9: “For *tapas* it is when one abstains from food.”

⁹⁵ Śat. Br. IX, 5, 1, 2: “For *tapas* it is when, after being initiated [at the *Dīkṣā*], one lives on fast milk.” See also Śat. Br. III, 2, 2, 7-19.

⁹⁶ Śat. Br. III, 4, 4, 26.

⁹⁷ Śat. Br. III, 4, 4, 27.

⁹⁸ Taitt. Saṃ. VII, 4, 9, 1.

⁹⁹ See, for example, Gautama Dharma Sūtra XIX, 15; Baudhāyana Dharma Śāstra III, 10, 13.

as a means of atoning for specific transgressions. The *cāndrāyana* or lunar penance, for example, requires that the transgressor increase his daily mouthfuls of food as the moon increases and diminish them as the moon decreases until at the new moon he fasts entirely.¹⁰⁰ Gautama Dharma Sūtra XXVII, 16 notes that “he who has completed that [month-long penance] becomes free from sin and free from crime, and *destroys* all guilt.” Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra in this context notes: “A month during which he performs a *Cāndrāyana*, the [sages] have called... ‘a means of purification (*pavitra*).’ It is prescribed as an expiation of all (offences) for which no (special penance) has been mentioned.”¹⁰¹ Fasts of various duration and intensity are meticulously prescribed as atonement for an almost endless number of specific transgressions. For example, a man who has intentionally killed a dog must fast for three days as his penance.¹⁰² A penance for eating forbidden food consists of fasting until the entrails are empty.¹⁰³

Many of the penances which entail fasting have proper names which clearly indicate their relation to *tapas*. Thus, for example, the *Tapta-kṛicchra* or hot penance consists of drinking hot milk, hot water, hot clarified butter, inhaling hot air, and fasting for prescribed periods.¹⁰⁴ The heat or *tapas* of these items no doubt is regarded as a power which can destroy or consume impurity. The Taittirīya Saṃhitā, for example, had already noted that hot milk is consumed for purity.¹⁰⁵ Of particular interest are the *Sāmtapana*, the *Mahāsāmtapana*, and the *Atisāmtapana* penances. Not only do they all entail fasts of varying intensity but the term *sāmtapana* clearly connotes “torment” or pain.¹⁰⁶ The *Mahāsāmtapana* penance is thus the penance of “great torment”¹⁰⁷ and the *Atisāmtapana* the “extremely tormenting” penance.¹⁰⁸ Transparency to the early meaning of \sqrt{tap} , namely pain, is evident. Through pain impurity is destroyed.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, Viṣṇu XLVII, 1-3.

¹⁰¹ Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra XXIII, 47.

¹⁰² Viṣṇu L, 30.

¹⁰³ Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra I, 9, 27, 3.

¹⁰⁴ See, for example, Manu XI, 215.

¹⁰⁵ Taitt. Saṃ. V, 2, 9, 3; VI, 5, 6, 4.

¹⁰⁶ See, for example, J. Jolly's translation of Viṣṇu XLVI, 19.

¹⁰⁷ Monier-Williams, p. 801.

¹⁰⁸ See, for example, J. Jolly's translation of Viṣṇu XLVI, 21.

In addition to fasting, *prāṇāyāma* (i.e. holding, supressing, or regulating one's breath) was also practiced by the *dīkṣita* during the ritual in order to generate *tapas* or "magical heat" within the body.¹⁰⁹ In the Brāhmaṇas *prāṇāyāma* was regarded as a form of *tapas* which accompanies the ritual recitation of the Veda.¹¹⁰ The legal literature continues to equate *prāṇāyāma* with *tapas*. Manu, in fact, notes that *prāṇāyāma* is the best or highest form of *tapas*.¹¹¹ Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra XXV, 5 also notes that *prāṇāyāma* is the highest form of *tapas* because through *prāṇāyāma* one generates *tapas* even to the ends of the hair and nails. In the legal literature *prāṇāyāma*, like fasting, functions primarily as a form of penance. Manu VI, 69, for example, states that *prāṇāyāma* must be performed "in order to expiate (the death) of those creatures which [one] unintentionally injures by day or night." He also notes that if one injures an animal, one regains purity by performing *prāṇāyāma* as a penance.¹¹² Viṣṇu notes that *all evils* or transgressions may be effaced by the repeated practice of *prāṇāyāma* (LV, 8) and Baudhāyana Dharma Sūtra states that precisely because *prāṇāyāma* is the highest form of *tapas* it serves as the best means of destroying evil or guilt (IV, I, 30).

It is noteworthy that fire imagery is continually associated with the breaths of man and *prāṇāyāma*. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa II, 2, 2, 18 equated the breaths of man with the sacrificial fire and relatedly *tapas*. Atharva Veda V, 28, 1 had already noted that the breaths within man are "enveloped with *tapas*." Jaiminiya Upaniṣad-Brāhmaṇa III, 32, 2-3 noted that breath is man's essence or innerself (i.e. *antarātman*), that this inner self is *tapas*, and that fire is the essence of *tapas*. "Therefore the breath of one who is heated [i.e. generates *tapas* through the practice of *tapas*] becomes hotter."¹¹³ Such speculation lead eventually to the conclusion that regulation of breath or *prāṇāyāma* purifies through the power of an internal fire. Thus Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra XXV, 6, for example, states that through *prāṇāyāma* "air is generated and through air fire is produced... hence [one] is internally purified." An Upaniṣad notes that not only the external fire but also man's internal

¹⁰⁹ See in this context Eliade, p. 337.

¹¹⁰ See, for example, Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa III, 3, 1; Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa XXIII, 5.

¹¹¹ Manu II, 83; VI, 70; Viṣṇu LV, 17.

¹¹² Manu XI, 142.

¹¹³ *tasmāt tapyamānasyo 'ṣṇatarah prāṇo bhavati*.

fire is a pure (i.e. *śuci*) and purifying (i.e. *pavamāna*) purifier (i.e. *pāvaka*).¹¹⁴ Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā XVII, 12 had already noted that Agni, as breath, dwells within man and purifies. The term *pavamāna*, in fact, often applied to Agni, means not only “purifying” but also “the blowing one,” equated with breath at Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa II, 2, 1, 6. Transparency to the destructive power of *tapas* is often evident. Manu VI, 71, for example, notes: “As the impurities of metallic ores, melted in the blast (of a furnace) are consumed, even so the taints of the organs are destroyed through the suppression of breath.” It is the fire of *prāṇāyāma* which purifies.

As noted, the Brāhmaṇas repeatedly associated *prāṇāyāma* with *svādhyāya* or disciplined recitation of the Veda.¹¹⁵ The Veda was ritually recited while the breath was suppressed, held, or “sacrificed.” *Svādhyāya* was, in fact, itself regarded as a form of *tapas*.¹¹⁶ Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa XI, 5, 7, 4, in this context, notes that during the practice of *svādhyāya* one is “burned (with [sacred] fire)”¹¹⁷ up to the tips of the nails.” The legal literature continues to regard *svādhyāya* as a form of *tapas*. Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra I, 4, 12, 1, for example, notes that *svādhyāya* is *tapas* and Manu II, 166 states that *svādhyāya* is for a Brahmin the highest form of *tapas*. Manu II, 167, in clear dependence on Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa XI, 5, 7, 4, notes: “Man performs the highest *tapas*, up to the extremities of his nails,” when practicing *svādhyāya*.

Svādhyāya, like fasting and *prāṇāyāma*, is repeatedly prescribed as a penance. Viṣṇu notes in this context that *svādhyāya* purifies and also that it frees one from guilt or evil.¹¹⁸ Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra XXV, 12 states that if the guilt of all transgressions were to fall on one man, ten thousand recitations of the *Gāyatrī* (i.e. a particular verse of the Ṛg Veda) would serve as a means of purification. Baudhāyana Dharma Śāstra IV, 1, 29-30 notes that *svādhyāya* is the highest form of *tapas* and thus “the best means of removing all sin.” Viṣṇu LV, 13 employs a familiar image in noting that through recitation of the Veda “a twice-born man is purified even from a mortal sin [i.e. *mahāpātaka*], as a

¹¹⁴ Maitrī Upaniṣad VI, 34.

¹¹⁵ See note 110.

¹¹⁶ See, for example, Taittirīya Āraṇyaka II, 14, 3.

¹¹⁷ See Eggeling, Part V, p. 100 n.

¹¹⁸ Viṣṇu L, 47; LV 4-5; LVI.

snake (is freed) from its withered skin.” Predictably, fire imagery is also prevalent: “As a fire, fanned by wind, burns brighter, and (as its flame grows) through offerings, even so a [Brahmin] who is engaged in *svādhyāya* shines with a brilliant lustre.”¹¹⁹ Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra XXVII, 7 notes that *svādhyāya* destroys guilt and Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra XXVII, 1 states that the fire of Vedic recitation destroys the guilt of a man just as a fire consumes fuel.¹²⁰

Clearly *tapas* per se, as well as the specific forms of *tapas* described, are perceived to have great power in removing or destroying impurity. The glorification of *tapas* in the legal literature is such, however, that it is granted not only the power to overcome impurity but also to prevent it. Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra XXVI, 19, for example, states: “No guilt taints a [Brahmin] who ... practices *tapas* ... though he may constantly commit sinful acts.” *Tapas* is, in fact, perceived to be equivalent to *dharma* or moral action itself: “(The pursuit of sacred) knowledge is the *tapas* of a [Brahmin], protecting (the people) is the *tapas* of a Kṣatriya, (the pursuit of) his daily business is the *tapas* of a Vaiśya, and service the *tapas* of a Śūdra.”¹²¹ It is then not surprising that Manu (XI, 245) declares the power of *tapas* to be “incomparable” and states that: “All the bliss of gods and men is declared by the sages to whom the Veda was revealed, to have *tapas* for its root, *tapas* for its middle, and *tapas* for its end.”¹²²

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¹¹⁹ Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra XXVI, 13.

¹²⁰ In addition to fasting, *prāṇāyāma*, and *svādhyāya*, other ascetic restraints observed by the *dīkṣita* are prescribed as a means of atonement (Vasiṣṭha Dharma Śāstra XXIV, 5). Of particular note is sexual abstinence or *brahmacarya* which was repeatedly regarded as a form of *tapas* in the ritual literature (See Gonda, p. 295). The legal literature continues to regard sexual continence as a form of *tapas* (BDS III, 10, 13; GDS XIX, 15) and frequently prescribes it as a penance. Atonement for killing a Kṣatriya, for example, requires continence for nine years (BDS II, 1, 1, 8), and committing adultery requires one to remain chaste for two years as a penance (GDS XXII, 29).

¹²¹ Manu XI, 236.

¹²² Manu XI, 235.

ADORANTS IN PREHISTORIC ART

Prehistoric Attitudes and Gestures of Prayer

JOHANNES MARINGER

Adorants are persons performing an act of adoration or invocation to a higher being. This act is always accompanied by a posture of the body or motion of the limbs to express or emphasize a desire or to enforce a request. According to Fr. Heiler,¹ there occur rather many attitudes and gestures of adorants in the historic and primitive world. They vary from standing, kneeling, sitting or squatting to prostrating, from inclining the head or bending the upper part of the body to raising one or both arms or extending them with the hands opened (above to the heavenly powers, down to the chthonic ones) or with spread fingers to uplifting the arms to or above the head, from clasping the hands, joining them to crossing above the breast, to touching an altar or idol to kissing them. Widely spread is also the cultic nudity, at least taking off the head- of foot-gear.

All these attitudes and gestures represent a legacy of past times. They belong to forms of religion which have kept alive throughout centuries and even millenaries. Because of their being an old traditional legacy the interpretation of their meaning and the discovery of their origin are not quite simple. At any rate, they include an ingenious symbolism: in the different attitudes and gestures there we find expressed the special relation of man to a deity, further the elementary religious feeling of weakness, dependence or longing desire.

Since analogous attitudes and gestures are found in social life, in greeting, doing homage and imploring other fellows, especially superiors, they are ambivalent. As to the prehistoric past, only art shows us these attitudes and gestures. But art is silent. The only help are the context of the picture and some knowledge of the then religion.

The most ancient art is that of the Upper Palaeolithic (50/30, 000-10,000 B.C.), the so-called Ice Age Art. It developed in this far remote

¹ Fr. Heiler, *Das Gebet. Eine religionsgeschichtliche und religions-psychologische Untersuchung*, München ⁴ 1921, pp. 100-109.

period in caves, rock-shelters, on rocks and small objects of bone, horn, and ivory. This genuine art was produced by hunters and was in the first line restricted to animals of the hunting realm, but there appear, however much rarer, also human beings and beings of the transcendent world. Some of their gestures have been interpreted by prehistorians as gestures of prayer.

According to H. Müller-Karpe,² all depends upon the question as to how far the cognition of dependence from transcendent beings and of relation to these in the original form of mystic vision and presentimental experience were already conceptionally perceived. As to some palaeolithic statuettes and reliefs, we may eventually speak of attitudes of prayer or an act of offering, if we do not envisage too restricted concrete gestures of later religions, but remember that the fundamental element of prayer consists simply in the desire of a thoughtful communication with the divinity. Anyhow, we are permitted in face of palaeolithic human representations with raised arms, I dare say, to think of praying persons. Already the human figurines, used as pendants and grave goods express to prehistoric man more than a confrontation of the ego with the superhuman nature; they seem to reflect the perception of his creatural condition and the presentiment of his relation to the transcendental world. Müller-Karpe points to C. Schuchhardt³ who sees in the posture of some statues and statuettes with hands upon or under the breast⁴ a gesture of prayer.

There are other more probable examples. A. Marshack⁵ refers to an engraved fragment of bone from Laugerie-Basse, Dordogne, with the image of a huge fish, two humanoids with upraised arms and a lone arm below the fish. The context points to an act of adoration according to him in a mythical one. Another engraved bone from the same site depicts hind legs and a phallus of a bull standing over a naked, pregnant woman who is lying on her back raising her hands. Some other engraved lines suggest that the woman may be standing in prayer, in worship or adoration. From the same site and level there

² H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte I Altsteinzeit*, München 1966, pp. 252, 256.

³ C. Schuchhardt, *Alteuropa. Kulturen — Rassen — Völker*, Berlin-Leipzig³ 1935, p. 30.

⁴ Müller-Karpe (n. 2 above), Pl. 27, A2, 215, 1, 241, 25, 243, 2, 4, 14.

⁵ A. Marshack, *The Roots of Civilization. The cognitive Beginnings of Man's First Art, Symbol and Notation*, London 1972, pp. 274, 320, Figs. 189, 157.

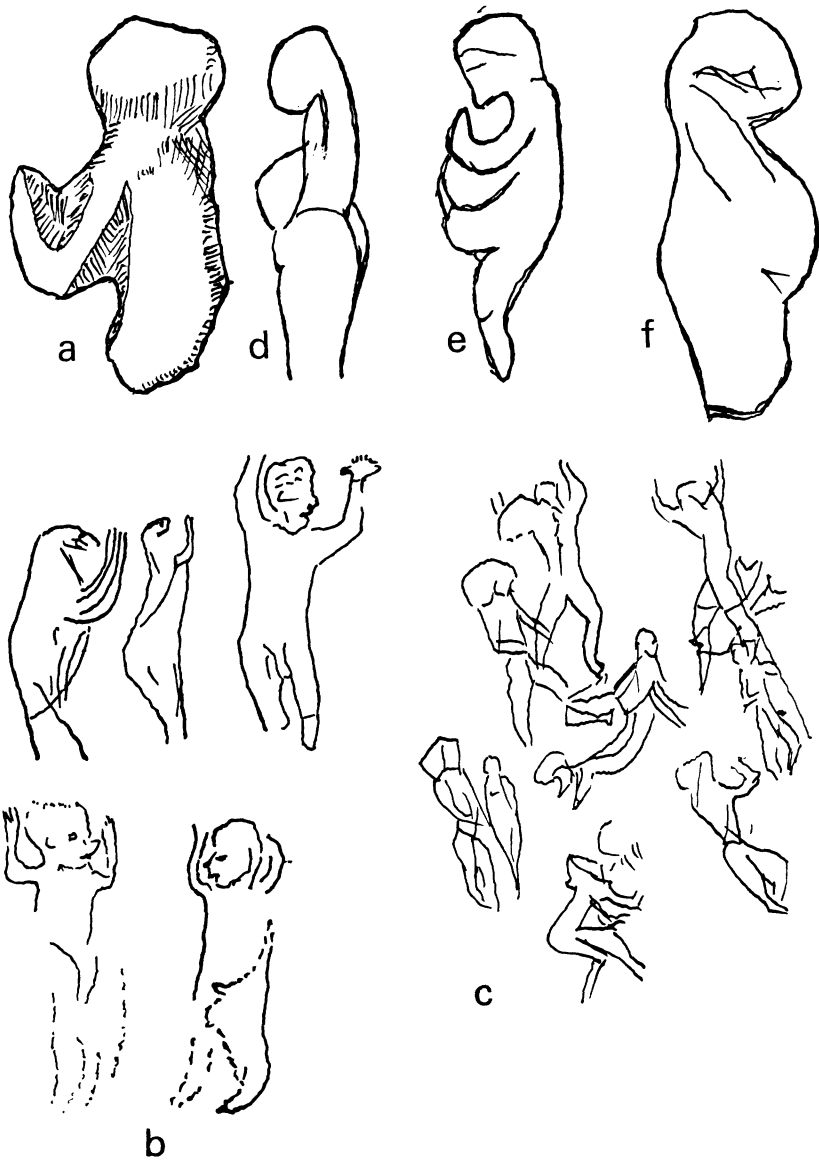


Fig. 1

comes a tiny, broken, crudely carved statuette of a reindeer antler which depicts a faceless human being with arms lifted like in prayer or adoration (Fig. 1a); it is, moreover, quite similar to two engravings from this area which exhibit crudely engraved men with a bison and seymboic horse heads. These men raise their arms and are bent forward as in supplication.⁶ From Isturitz, Basses-Pyrénées, there comes another engraved bone with two naked decorated females, apparently in prayer when the bone is held vertically.⁷ Here should also be mentioned a fragment of engraved bone from Le Morin, Gironde, on which a right and left hand are engraved, one above the other, each with hand open as though in adoration or reverence. Above the hands is an unusual schematic image of multiple angles pointing downward that looks like rain or water. Both the hands and the angular series appear as symbolic elements throughout the European Upper Palaeolithic. Since each element in this engraving is one symbol in a larger story, Marshack⁸ tentatively assumes that the angles were attributes or symbols in a myth and that the hands indicate the human participation in the myth.

From the cave La Marche, Vienne, about 200 stone slabs with crudely engraved human heads and humanoids were collected, among them several humanoids with raised arms (Fig. 1b). These give, according to Fr. Bourdier,⁹ the impression of adorants. The La Marche pictures differ so much from all other engraved figures of the Upper Palaeolithic that grave doubts in the genuiness have been expressed, but many renowned investigators stand up for their originality. A scenic rock engraving in the cave of Addaura, Prov. Palermo, Sicily, in which two humanoids raise their arms Fig. 1c is by Müller-Karpe¹⁰ interpreted as a cultic scene with two adorants.

It remains to mention the pictures of hands in many caves of West Europe, especially in that of Gargas, Hautes-Pyrénées.¹¹ They were produced by stereotyping the color-smeared hand on the rock or pressing the hand against a color-smeared spot of the rock. They

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 321, Fig. 190.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 223, Fig. 192.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 325, Fig. 193.

⁹ Fr. Bourdier, "Le rôle du climat wurmien dans la genèse de l'art paléolithique," *Atti VI. Congr. int. scienze preistor. et protostor.* II, Roma 1965, p. 124, Pl. XIV2.

¹⁰ Müller-Karpe (n. 2 above), Pl. 223, 1.

¹¹ Fr. Eppel, *Fund und Deutung*, Wien-München 1958, Fig. 77.

were comprehensively studied by A. R. Verbrugge¹² and L. Kirchner.¹³ As they cannot be explained but by ethnographic analogies, they are most probably gestures of offering or/and imploring made to a spirit or deity whose abode the cave was.

Whereas the examples from West Europe belong to the Magdalenian (15,000-10/8,000 B.C.), Middle and East Europe have yielded earlier ones, namely from the Aurignacian (30,000-20,000 B.C.). From the Aurignacian of Austria there comes the famous soft stone plastic of the "Venus" of Willendorf, a fat, abundant, faceless female with a crown of matronly waves or curls, with two thick arms and hands resting on an enormous bosom. The statuette had been painted with red ochre, a symbolic color: blood, life and vitality.¹⁴ The big hair crown and the faceless appearance give the impression of an inclined head and, together with the holding of the arms, that of an attitude of reverence or prayer. Probably, that may have been the attitude of prayer for women at that time.

The Aurignacian site of Gagarino at the upper Don River, USSR, has yielded several female statuettes, carved from ivory; among these two or three show the same attitude¹⁵ (Fig. 1e). The same holds true in case of a crude stone plastic from Kostjenki near Veronece at the Don-River¹⁶ (Fig. 1f).

Likewise Italy offers two examples, one of sandstone from Chiozza, Prov. Reggio Emilia, the other, carved in soapstone, from Mentone (Fig. 1d), Ventimiglia; they also exhibit impressively the attitude of women absorbed in prayer.¹⁷

In the first epiglacial period, the Mesolithic (10/8,000-7/5,000 B.C.) the splendid art of the Upper palaeolithic hunters disappeared. The mesolithic hunters and fishermen practised a more schematized, geometric art, mostly on pieces of bone and horn. Only the hunters of South Spain exercised a lifeful painting art on rocks. Famous is a picture frieze at Cogul, Prov. Lerida, which displays several animals,

¹² A. R. Verbrugge, *Le symbol de la main dans la préhistoire*, Courances 1958.

¹³ L. Kirchner, *Jungpaläolithische Handdarstellungen der franko-kantabrischen Felsbilderzone*, Göttingen 1959.

¹⁴ J. Maringer and H.-G. Bandi, *Art in the Ice Age — Spanish Levant Art — Arctic Art*, London-New York 1953, Fig. 145.

¹⁵ Müller-Karpe (n. 2 above), Pl. 248D, 33-35.

¹⁶ Eppel (n. 11 above), Fig. 63f.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Fig. 63c.

a group of dancing females with more or less raised arms and two females with raised arms apart.¹⁸ The final impression of the whole assemblage—allegedly painted in intervals—is that of a magic scene, in which the women conjure the animals of hunt. A similar scene is depicted in a painted frieze of the Cueva Vieja, Alpera, Prov. Albacete, where two sorcerers with upraised arms and holding bow and arrows in their hands are conjuring the animals.¹⁹ This gesture of magical conjuring is alike to that of prayer, both being founded in the same human request.

Among the red-painted pebbles from Mas d'Azil, Ariège, there occurs a motive which gives the impression of a schematized praying figure. H. Obermaier²⁰ has detected that this motive corresponds in a surprising manner to figures of adorants in the schematic rock-art of neolithic Spain. In both cases the figures were connected with the cult of ancestors (Fig. 2a).

In the Neolithic (7/5,000-3/2,000 B.C.) we meet with a great many representations of adorants painted as well as engraved on rocks on stones, on ceramic vessels and in form of statuettes.

Thus the above-mentioned schematic rock art of Spain shows many figures with raised arms, to all appearance representing adorants. The sites are considered by H. Breuil²¹ as cult places, above all dedicated to the cult of the ancestors. In this context the adorants have acted as intercessors for the living ones. The same ideology seems to have been connected with the idols of Almeria near Madrid. Likewise, in France there were found adorants on megalithic menhirs: menhir of Saint-Micaud, Saône-et-Loire, with the figure of an adorant in front of a serpent. As to the serpent it was venerated in the megalithic world as a sacred animal, connected with the goddess of death and the chthonic earth.

Similar figures occur in Arctic Art of Norway. The most impressing example, a scenic representation, was discovered in the Folsomhulen (cave of Folsom) at Leka, Nord-Trøndelag. The painting in red shows at right a huge cross, measuring more than two meters in height and

¹⁸ Maringer and Bandi (n. 14 above) Fig. 63c.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Fig. 148.

²⁰ H. Obermaier, "Nouvelles études sur l'art rupestre de Levant Espagnol," *L'Anthropologie* 17, 1937, pp. 491-495, Fig. 9, 3.

²¹ H. Breuil, *Les peintures rupestres schématiques de la Péninsule Ibérique*, Lagny 1935, IV, p. 150, Pl. XX, Fig. 68, 58.

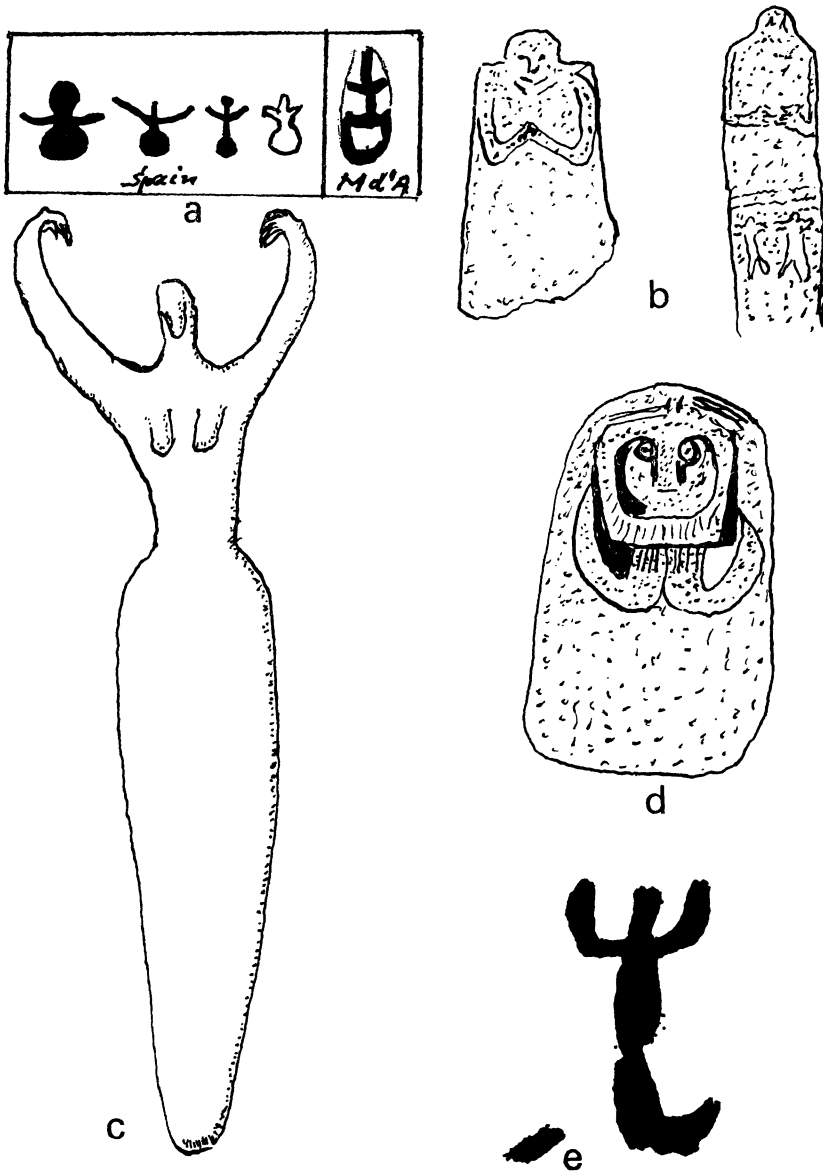


Fig. 2

breadth, and in front of it a row of 13 male figures with stretched arms and spread feet.²² The cultic character of the scene is beyond doubt, even if we do not know or only guess the meaning of the cross (probably a symbol of the univers). We may see in the man dancers or/and adorants. They were surely performing a ceremonial act of veneration or supplication.

Among the petroglyphs at Lake Onega in Karelia and on the banks of the Vyg River near Sereka on the White Sea, there are many figures of adorants with upraised arms.²³ Likewise in South Russia there occur many figures with raised arms among the petroglyphs.²⁴ Further there exist anthropomorphous stele figures having the hands joined in the gesture of prayer Fig. 2b.²⁵

The gesture of prayer with raised hands was also encountered on engraved rocks of Sibiria, and often so, according to A. P. Okladnikov.²⁶

In the Near East there were adorants manifoldly depicted on wall-frescoes, on seals, on stone statues, and terracotta plates. In the Babylonian palace at Mari the fresco-paintings exhibit several so-called introduction and offering scenes; always an attendant with upraised arms assists to the ceremony.²⁷ Many seals show the same scene including the praying attendant, the hands raised up to the level of the breast or one hand upraised over the right shoulder, the other one resting on the breast or both hands raised in front of the breast.²⁸ Among the petroglyphs of Anatolia there occurs a kneeling person with a votive offering²⁹ (Fig. 2e).

Egypt has yielded many votive adorants, sculptured in stone, mostly

²² G. Gjessing, *Nordenfjelske Ristninger og Malinger av den arktiske Gruppe*, Oslo 1936, Pl. L.

²³ M. Gimbutas, *The Prehistory of Eastern Europe*, Part I, *Mesolithic, Neolithic and Copper Age Cultures in Russia and the Baltic Area*, Cambridge, Mass. 1956, Fig. 114.

²⁴ A. Häusler, *Südrussische und nordkaukasische Petroglyphen*, Wiss. Z. Univ. Halle, Ges.-Sprachw. XII, 1963, Pl. XVI-XVII.

²⁵ A. Häusler, *Anthropomorphe Stelen des Eneolithikums im nordpontischem Raum*, Wiss. Z. Univ. Halle XV, 1966, Pl. VII, 5-6.

²⁶ A. P. Okladnikov, *Der Hirsch mit dem goldenen Geweih. Vorgeschichtliche Felsbilder Sibiriens*, Wiesbaden 1972, pp. 39, 56, Fig. 7, 10, 12.

²⁷ H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte III Kupferzeit*, München 1974, Pl. 229.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Pl. 240-244.

²⁹ M. Uyanik, *Petroglyphs of south-eastern Anatolia*, Graz 1974, Fig. 14.

joining the hands in front of the breast, but also kneeling with this gesture.³⁰ From predynastic tombs there were collected many figurines with arm stumps, besides these also female ones with raised arms.³¹ One figurine has the arms raised above and behind the head, a gesture which also appears on a stone vessel from Abydos in the context of a cultic ceremony³² (Fig. 2c).

Plentiful are the plastic figurines of the agriculturists in southeast Europe, especially in the Balkan peninsula. As J. Neustupný³³ states: "We must be aware that the cult of fertility comprised a whole set of equipment: figurines of worshippers, priestesses, devotees, zoomorphic figurines, vessels, etc.". Similarly S. Marinescu-Bilcu³⁴ writes that especially in the Gumelnița culture of eastern Romania and eastern Bulgaria plastics are abundant and that there occur many ones with arms raised in different forms: stretched aside, raised in adoration or conjuration. Some of them, however, are interpreted by M. Gimbutas³⁵ as "Bee-Goddess or "Birth-giving Goddess."

Further, we have some plastics of anthropomorphic figures from Moravia, Czechoslovakia, which in all probability represent adorants. Thus a female figurine in clay of 36 cm height from Hlubocké Mašůvky has the arms slightly raised and her face lifted to the sky.³⁶ According to E. and J. Neustupný³⁷ many specimens of this kind have been found; they were probably used in some sort of cult ceremony. There exists another plastic from Stěpanovice, belonging to the painted ceramic of Moravia, with the arms raised high up, the hands being

³⁰ Müller-Karpe (n. 27 above), Pl. 250, 5, 12-13, 16.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Pl. 215. See also H. Müller-Karpe, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte II Jungsteinzeit*, München 1968, p. 940.

³² J. Ucko, *Anthropomorphic Figurines of Predynastic Egypt and Neolithic Crete with comparative material from the prehistoric Near East and Mainland Greece*, London 1968, Pl. XX, XXVI, Fig. 44. See also K. J. Narr, *Urgeschichte der Kultur*, Kröners Taschenausgabe Bd. 213 Stuttgart 1961, Pl. 15 and 13.

³³ J. Neustupný, *Studies on the Eneolithic Plastic Art*, Prag 1956, p. 84.

³⁴ S. Marinescu-Bilcu, "Die Bedeutung einiger Gesten und Haltungen in der jungsteinzeitlichen Skulptur der ausserkarpatischen Gebiete Rumäniens," *Dacia* NS XI Bucarest 1967, p. 56.

³⁵ M. Gimbutas, *The Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe 7000 to 3500 BC. Myths, Legends and Cult Images*, London 1974, pp. 174-177, 184.

³⁶ E. and J. Neustupný, *Czechoslovakia Before the Slavs*, APP Vol. 23, London-New York 1961, Pl. 26.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

open.³⁸ J. Skutil³⁹ attributes to it the attitude of adoration, in time and space widely spread. The plastic from Hlubocké, the biggest one until now known, was excavated in a settlement. To E. Salm and Fr. Vildomec⁴⁰ the attitude of an adorant is clearly given. They report on another specimen from the same settlement, which served as a handle of an earthen dish. This feature seems to point that food was consumed with a gesture of requesting or/and thanksgiving.

Similar clay figurines were not totally alien to Middle Europe as far as it was influenced by the peasant culture of the Danube region. But they are less realistic and significant.

In France, the megalithic anthropomorphic menhir-statues show often persons with the arms on the breast or womb in an attitude of reverence or adoration⁴¹ (Fig. 2d).

The Bronze Age started in the Near East already about 3,000 B.C. there being protohistoric in age. In Europe the prehistoric Bronze Age began about 1,800 and ended 800 B.C. A great many figures of adorants appear now in the rock art of North Europe; there occur, moreover, bronze figurines.

Among the cast-bronze statuettes from Grevens Vaenge in South Zealand, Denmark, there are two figures of men with horned helmets in a kneeling posture. Likewise, there occurs in a group, found in Fårdal, a small kneeling female figurine with a lifted arm in front of a winding serpent.⁴² According to C.-A. Althin,⁴³ this is a scene of adoration of the chthonic serpent. Another statuette from the same site represents a horned pair side by side in kneeling position.⁴⁴ A similar scene with a winding serpent and a standing man with highly upraised arms exists on a rock at Vintlyke, Bohuslän, Sweden.⁴⁵

³⁸ W.-B. Forman and J. Poulik, *Kunst der Vorzeit*, Prag 1956, Pl. 14.

³⁹ J. Skutil, "Die neolithischen Plastiken aus dem Kreise der mährischen bemalten Keramik," *IPEK XIII-XIV* 1939-40, Pl. 41-42a.

⁴⁰ E. Salm und Fr. Vildomec, "Ein wichtiges neolithischen Idol aus Mähren," *IPEK XI* 1936-37, p. 36.

⁴¹ S. Cless-Reden, *Die Spur der Zyklopen*, Köln 1960, Figs. 47, 49.

⁴² O. Klindt-Jensen, *Denmark Before the Vikings*, APP Vol. 4, London-New York 1957, p. 78.

⁴³ C.-A. Althin, *Studien zu den bronzezeitlichen Felszeichnungen von Skåne*, Lund 1945, pp. 204-205, Fig. 106.

⁴⁴ H. C. Broholm, "Anthropomorphic Bronze Age Figures in Denmark," *Acta Arch.* 18, 1947, p. 202.

⁴⁵ Althin (n. 43 above), p. 204, Fig. 103.

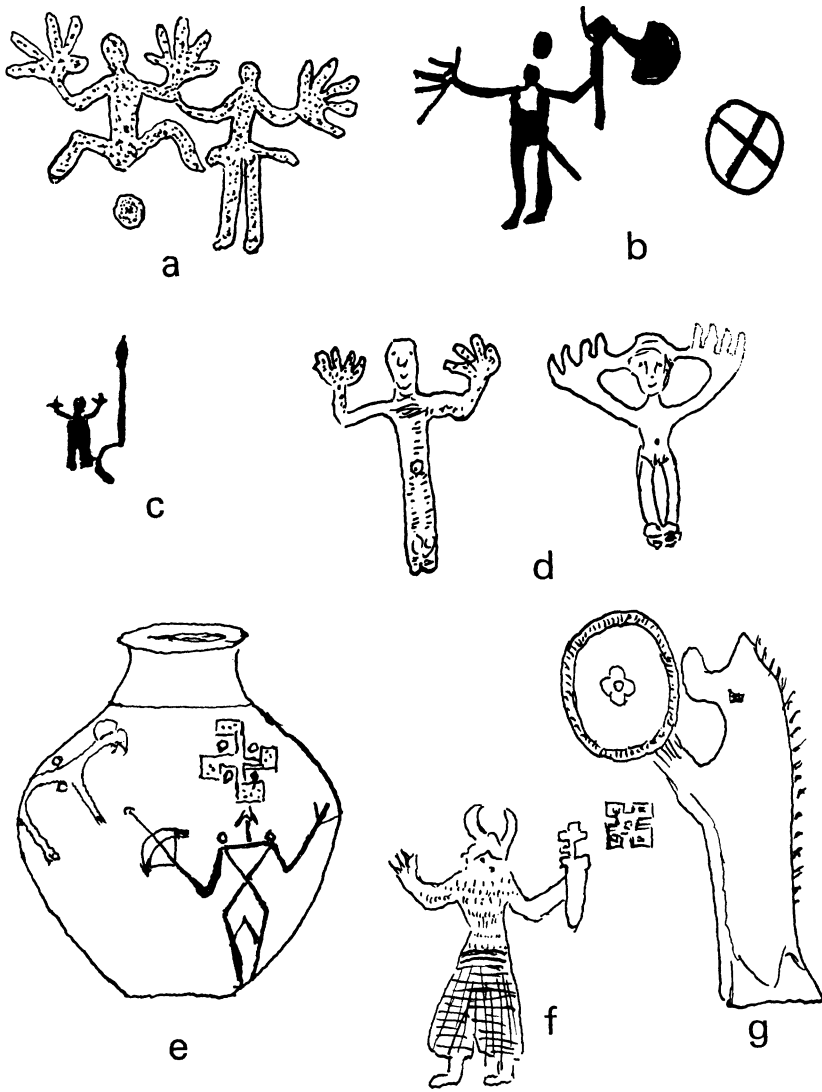


Fig. 3

From Zealand we have still to mention one or two adorants, one being perhaps a dancer, in front of a solar symbol ⁴⁶ (Fig. 3a). In the rock art of Norway there occur likewise figures with uplifted hands (Fig. 3d), to all appearance adorants. ⁴⁷ Besides these, a rock "den stora stenhellen" at Nylende, exhibits carved arms with spread fingers, which are probably an abbreviation of the gesture of praying. Sv. Marstrander ⁴⁸ has studied these carvings and sees in them a symbol of power. The question, however, is whether the hand is an abbreviation of a divine or a human being?

Most frequently men with upraised arms are found among the petroglyphs of Sweden, in Bohuslän as well as in Skåne. We refer here only to a few undoubted figures of adorants; we mentioned already the scene of serpent adoration from Vintlyke. At Rished in Bohuslän two men are depicted with uplifted arms and spread fingers, one springing or dancing above a solar disk. ⁴⁹ The rock of Flyhoff includes among his carvings a scene with a man who has slightly uplifted arms, the right one ending in spread fingers, the left one holding an axe; at the side is a wheel-cross (Fig. 3b), the symbol of the sun. ⁵⁰ At Tanum, Bohuslän, there are several carvings of the solar disk, surrounded by adorants. ⁵¹ Another carving shows a solar disk mounted on two wheels, reminding the famous sun-cart from Trundholm, and aside a squatting adorant. ⁵² At Stora Backa, Bohuslän, there are pictured many boats, animals, men bearing solar standards, and in four cases men with raised hands. ⁵³ Similar adorants are depicted on a solar boat at Disåsen, Backa. The same motif was found at Bro and at Finntorp, both near Tanum. ⁵⁴ At Hvitlycke, Tanum, there are six adorants following a big person. ⁵⁵ On a rock in Bohuslän

⁴⁶ E. Richter, *Das Hakenkreuz als Führer zu altgermanischer Kultur*, Mannus 23, Leipzig 1931, Fig. 103.

⁴⁷ Sv. Marstrander, *Østfolks jordbruksristninger Skejeberg*, Oslo 1963, Fig. 43.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 219-223.

⁴⁹ E. Sprockhoff, *Das bronzene Zierband von Kronshagen bei Kiel*, Offa 4, 1955, Fig. 42, 2.

⁵⁰ Althin (n. 43 above), Fig. 64.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Fig. 79.

⁵² H. Kühn, *Wenn Steine reden. Die Sprache der Felsbilder*, Wiesbaden 1966, Fig. 38.

⁵³ J. Alin, *Bohusläns och Göteborgstraktens fasta fornninnen*, Stockholm 1940, Fig. 9.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Figs. 19, 72.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Fig. 87.

there is represented an adorant in front of an upright standing spear (Fig. 3c), obviously a holy spear, perhaps of Tyr-Odin.⁵⁶ On other rocks of Bohuslän there occur sometimes two or three adorants, one standing, the other(s) head down.⁵⁷ They seem to represent adorants in a ritual acrobatic performance. In the last century, J. J. A. Worsaaak⁵⁸ has proposed the thesis that all the rock carvings were picture-fixed prayers.

In Middle Europe we know only of a single similar carving, deciphered on a slab of the stone cist of Anderlingen at Bremerförde in North Germany. It presents three male figures, one with an axe in the raised hand, the two others at his left and right with uplifted arms like adorants of the axe-god.⁵⁹ The neighbourhood to the nordic rock-carvings explains easily the connection with the nordic religious-mythical world.

Another center of rock art is found in northern Italy, in the Val Camonica near Brescia and in the West Alps around Mount Bego. There occur many representations of adorants, mostly in connection with a symbol of the sun, in form of a ring, often radiating, or with a stag, because of its rays-like antler being the able animal of the sun. A single adorant appears at Nadro, another in the Val Camonica. A scene of prayer or of dance around the stag-god is composed by three persons above a stag, mounted by a person likewise with uplifted arms. Another scene exhibits a radiate sun with many adorants. In another scene on a rock at Naquane there is a horseman with a radiate halo, lance and shield, obviously representing the sun-god, adored by two persons. Still another picture shows the sun-god with antlers, a serpent, and below aside a small adorant with uplifted arms. On the rock of Saints there are six carved hands, probably abbreviations of adorants.⁶⁰ At Mount Bego there occurs a carving on a slab depicting a person with raised arms, clothed in a kind of tunic,⁶¹ to all appear-

⁵⁶ Kühn (n. 52 above), Fig. 46.

⁵⁷ Sprockhoff (n. 49 above), Fig. 6.

⁵⁸ J. J. A. Worsaaak, *The industrial arts of Denmark from the earliest times to the danish conquest*, London 1882, p. 61.

⁵⁹ H. Kühn, *Die vorgeschichtliche Kunst Deutschlands*, Berlin 1935, Pl. 277.

⁶⁰ E. Anati, *La civilisation du Val Camonica*, Paris 1960. Figs. 21, 60, 68, Pl. 4, 7, 30, 46.

⁶¹ F. Sacco, *La bipenne porfirica del Passo Apeto, Alpi Marittime*, Torino 1939, Fig. 1.

ence a priest praying or imploring the blessing of the sun or sky for his flock down in the valley.

From the island of Sardinia there come many votive bronze statuettes; some of them represent adorants, others officiating priests as well as priestesses.⁶² Their offering-gesture is akin to that of prayer, because both embrace the wide range of adoration.

We encounter further votive bronze statuettes in East Europe, in Camunte, Caucasus, and near Kiev, Ukraine.⁶³ At Helenendorf, Transcaucasia, there were excavated decorated urns. Some of them show adorants, in one case, an adorant standing behind an animal, in another case an adorant with bow and arrow below a swastika, his weapons directed against an ibex (Fig. 3e), on a third urn an unarmed man behind an indistinct animal with raised arms.⁶⁴ In all these cases we met with hunters praying for game, in one case the recipient of the prayer is indicated by the symbol of the sun.

Adorants occur very often in the art of the islands of Cyprus, Crete and Cyclades in the East Mediterranean.

In the necropolis of Vounoi, Cyprus, there has been excavated a terracotta representing a ploughing-scene: a team of four oxes and, standing between them, a man with raised arms.⁶⁵ The same motif has been found on a seal in the contemporary Near East.⁶⁶

Statuettes of adorants are numerous in Crete. From a sanctuary in the mountains of Maza near Kalochorio there come many male and female terracottas, votary figurines with stretched or raised arms.⁶⁷ Among the finds from the cemetery of Gournia in East Crete there are also clay figurines of adorants, the left arm hanging down, the right one lifted to the breast.⁶⁸ This attitude reminds of a gesture of humble surrender, undoubtedly to a deity. Other votary clay figurines were found in tombs of Kumasa, Siteia and Heraklion, mostly female with

⁶² Chr. Zervos, *La civilisation de la Sardaigne*, Paris 1954, Figs. 108-111, 125, 460.

⁶³ M. Hoernes, *Urgeschichte der bildenden Kunst in Europa* 3. Auflage durchgesehen und ergänzt von O. Menghin, Wien 1925, Fig. 53.

⁶⁴ E. Rösler, *Archäologische Forschungen und Ausgrabungen in Transkaukasien*, *Zeitschr. f. Ethnologie* 33, 1901, Figs. 38-40, 68.

⁶⁵ P. Dikaïos, "Les cultes préhistoriques dans l'île de Chypre," *Rev. Syria* XIII, 1932, Fig. 1.

⁶⁶ M. Ebert (Ed.), *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte* I, Berlin 1923, Pl. 46.

⁶⁷ Müller-Karpe (n. 27 above), Pl. 391.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Pl. 388.

the arms crossed on the bosom.⁶⁹ More or less all the cemeteries of Crete yielded similar figurines and we may assume that the corpses were deposited in this attitude. From the palace sanctuary of Knossos there come a group of terracottas representing a goddess together with three attendants whose hands are covering the breasts.⁷⁰ There were also found many clay-statues, about 60 cm and more high, with uplifted arms; they obviously represent idols. Since the goddess is often represented in this attitude it may be a gesture of divine highness, not properly of adoration. This interpretation is supported by a scene on the plate of a gold ring from a grave at Isopata near Knossos, which includes four female persons in a festival attire, portraying the goddess and her devotees or priestesses. The alleged goddess has the arms upraised, likewise two of the attendants whereas the third one has only one arm raised, the other one hanging down.⁷¹ The whole scene seems to depict the epiphania of the goddess to her devotees.

The statuettes of adorants from Crete display a variety of gestures. A bronze statuette of a naked young male, 12 cm high, from the grotto of Psychro has the right hand in front of the breast, the left one hanging down.⁷² Another bronze statuette, 16 cm high, from Palai-kastro has the right hand uplifted to the forehead, the left one hanging down.⁷³ The same gesture is shown by a bronze statuette of 23 cm height from Tylissos,⁷⁴ likewise by a stone statuette of 8,8 cm height from the palace of Phaistos,⁷⁵ finally by a bronze statuette of 16,5 cm height from Tylissos.⁷⁶ Another bronze statuette of 8,3 cm height from the grotto of Psychro has the right arm bent up to the head, the left one bent down with the hand in front of the breast.⁷⁷ Again another of 14,3 cm height from near Phaistos shows the upper part of the body curved strongly backward, the head inclined and both arms uplifted to the chin.⁷⁸ A female bronze adorant of 13 cm height from

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Pl. 181.

⁷⁰ Sp. Marinatos, *Kreta und das mykenische Hellas*, München 1959, Pl. 132.

⁷¹ Gimbutas (n. 35 above), Fig. 146.

⁷² Chr. Zervos, *L'Art de la Crète, néolithique et minoenne*, Paris 1956, Fig. 454.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, Fig. 455.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Fig. 456.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Fig. 452.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, Fig. 458.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Fig. 459.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Fig. 502.

Hagia Triada has the right arm bent up to the head, the left one touching the hip.⁷⁹ A lead statuette of a female adorant, 10,5 cm high, from the small palace of Knossos has both arms uplifted with the palms in front.⁸⁰ Those adorants with the right hand uplifted to the forehead give the impression as if they tried to protect their eyes against the blinding splendor of the manifesting deity.

In the archipelago of the Cyclades there are adorants often painted on ceramic vessels. Their gesture of prayer or adoration is rather uniform: uplifted arms with spread fingers.⁸¹ An unique document is a fragmentary diadem or belt of silver, found in the acropolis of Halandriani, island of Syros, which exhibits a cycladic adorant in front of a solar symbol.⁸²

The Iron Age of prehistoric Europe has not yielded specimens of adorants worth mentioning. An exception appears in North Europe. Thus we see in the decorations of the golden horns from Gallehus several adorants in kneeling as well as in sitting posture with raised arms.⁸³ Another document is a tapestry found in the Oseberg ship, a ship-grave in Norway. There is one figure of a warrior, wearing a horned helmet, with upraised arms, the right hand open with spread fingers, the left one holding up a sword below a cross symbol (Fig. 3f). There is further another figure, wearing a boar mask with upraised arms addressed to a shield with a cross symbol⁸⁴ (Fig. 3g).

As we have seen, representations of adorants are very old and occurring through nearly all prehistoric ages. Their gestures and attitudes correspond surprisingly to the different forms quoted in our introduction. It may be of some interest that the posture of crossed hands resting on the breast or womb seems to have often been repeated on the corpses as a funeral rite, still today observed as a funeral custom.

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⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Fig. 453.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Fig. 497.

⁸¹ Chr. Zervos, *L'Art des Cyclades du début à la fin de l'Âge du Bronze*, Paris 1957, Figs. 171-173, 272.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Fig. 258.

⁸³ H. R. L. Davidson, *Pagan Scandinavia*, APP, Vol. 58, London-New York 1967, Fig. 17.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Figs. 25a-b.

REMARKS ON A POSSIBLE *CRIOBOLIUM* SITE IN
SAVARIA

G. S. R. THOMAS

Excavations in 1870 on a site next door to the Iseum of Savaria in Pannonia, the present day n° 18, Imre Thököly Street, in the Hungarian city of Szombathely, brought to light a mosaic-floored room, strewn with half-burnt animal bones, some small lamps, a few bronze coins dating to the reign of Constantine, gold coins for the reigns of Julian and Valens, and some grain.¹ It seemed, indeed, a find of little intrinsic worth and, accordingly, attracted no more attention for a century.

As part of a general review of cultic places of the old Roman province of Pannonia, I. Tóth re-examined these particular finds and proposed to interpret them as indicating a place of sacrifice in use during the final flourishing of pagan rites before the Christianization of the Empire.² His arguments command a great measure of respect. The half-burnt bones, and in particular the overwhelming number of severed sheep skulls, do not suggest that we have before us a midden of something like a butcher's shop; whereas the presence with them of small lamps, coins and grain fragments (presumably from sacred sacrificial cakes) does suggest that the site was a place of sacrifice. The coins play a second rôle in that they reveal a date for the activities performed on the site: A.D. 352 to 374, a dating confirmed by the depth of the stratum in which they were found.

Of course, the deity in whose honour these sacrifices were performed is unknown, as no dedications were found on the site. Seeing that it is next door to an Iseum, we might well have thought Isis was the recipient of them. Tóth, however, thought only of Cybele. In his eyes, the skeletal remains of the sheep, in particular the skulls, could but derive from *criobolia* which had been performed there in honour of the Great Mother of the Gods. And to bolster up this argumentation, he draws our attention to the intense cultic activities that were so much

¹ V. Lipp, *Archaeologiai Értesítő* 3, 1870, p. 43ff.

² I. Tóth, "IV. századi áldozóhely nyomai a Savaria Iseum mellett," in *Archaeologiai Értesítő* 102, 1975, pp. 46-51.

a feature of the so-called "Pagan Reaction" of the times, an important element of which was precisely the performance of the *taurobolium* or of its analogue, the *criobolium*.³

This line of argument is, however, faulty. If we allow that the burning of the bones and the beheading of the animal provide a basis for thinking that the site was a sacrificial one, we have still to remember that these actions did not form elements of the ceremonial of the *criobolium*, as far as can be known.⁴ One of the very bases for thinking that the site was a sacrificial one in fact lessens the probability that the ceremony practiced there was a *criobolium* in honour of the *Magna Mater*.

Of course, that evidence was not the sole basis for identifying the nature of the site. In fact, they need have had nothing to do with the ceremonial aspect of the rite whatsoever, and may but indicate the method of disposal of the remains. Granted that, we are nevertheless entitled to ask whether there is any other reason that can be adduced from these bones for believing that the site was the site of a *criobolium*. Tóth did not propose any; but we may do so. For one of the rites associated with the *criobolium* and *taurobolium* made use of the *cernus*⁵ which, according to one line of interpretation, contained the *uires* of the slaughtered beast. Now, debate has centred itself upon the precise significance to be attributed to these mysterious *uires*.⁶ The word evokes the idea of the power of the animal, which could notionally lie in its blood,⁷ in its testicles⁸ or in its bones.⁹ If we could accept

³ I. Tóth, *art. cit.*, p. 50.

⁴ See the evidence as set out in R. Duthoy, *The Taurobolium. Its Evolution and Terminology* (EPRO, 10), Leyden, 1969. Duthoy's case is, admittedly, conjectural, and R. Turcan, *Les religions de l'Asie dans la Vallée du Rhône* (EPRO, 30), Leyden, 1972, p. 85, n. 1, expresses grave doubts on the wisdom of departing from the only explicit account of the ceremony that we possess, viz. that of Prudentius, *Peri Stephanon*, X, 1006-1050, for which M. J. Vermaseren, *Cybele and Attis. The Myth and the Cult*, London, 1977, p. 104, fig. 30, has reproduced an imaginary illustration.

⁵ Cf. R. Duthoy, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-76, together with the illustration reproduced by M. J. Vermaseren, *op. cit.*, p. 48, fig. 18.

⁶ See the discussion by R. Duthoy, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-74.

⁷ Cf. A. Lavergne, *Revue de Gascogne* 23, 1892, p. 507.

⁸ Cf. R. Duthoy, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-74; M. J. Vermaseren, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-106, 183.

⁹ Cf. A. Allmer-P. Dissard, *Inscriptions antiques du Musée de Lyon*, vol. I, Lyons, 1888, pp. 23-24; E. Espérandieu, *Inscriptions antiques de Lectoure*, Auch-Paris, 1892, pp. 33-36, 107-110.

the last interpretation, we could find support for such a belief in the observable fact that many of the taurobolic altars were adorned with bas-reliefs of the head of a bull and/or the head of a sheep.¹⁰ If the skulls of these animals were, or possessed, their *uires*, then we could justify taking the discoveries as evidence of the site of a *criobolium*. However, recent interpretations do not favour the hypothesis I have been suggesting. Moreover, the altars do not show a skull but rather the whole head of the animal, and that, I am inclined to think, is a case of representing the whole by the part. And so we have to conclude that no cultic significance can be seen in these skulls and other bones.

Finally, it is not enough to refer to the well-known practice of performing *criobolia* and *taurobolia* in the fourth century after Christ unless it can be shown that the activity in Savaria belonged to the same series. And that is precisely what cannot be shown. For, despite the fact that Tóth draws to our attention that Savaria was a major provincial capital with its own imperial palace, the *taurobolia* and *criobolia* of the times constituted a phenomenon belonging to the Western Empire, and more specifically to the *Phrygianum* of Rome where the vast majority took place,¹¹ and where the real centre of senatorial opposition to the Christian emperors was located.

It is, of course, perfectly possible that *taurobolia* and *criobolia* were performed without the setting up of a monument to record the fact, though the important nature of the ceremony would usually have demanded it, one would think. But without such epigraphical evidence to help us, we are entirely left in the dark. And no such document purports to so identify the Savarian sacrificial site.

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¹⁰ See, e.g., M. J. Vermaseren, *Corpus Cultus Cybelae Attidisque*, vol. III: *Italia-Latium* (EPRO, 50), Leyden, 1977, pl. CXVII (head of bull and head of sheep together).

¹¹ For the collected evidence, see R. Duthoy, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.

THE ROLE OF 'BELIEF' IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

A response to W. C. Smith *

DONALD WIEBE

I

The concept of belief as an interpretive category in the scholarly study of religion has recently come under heavy criticism from various quarters. The concept of belief, it is argued, is not merely useless in the task of interpreting the meaning of the historical religious traditions, but rather is positively misleading. Consequently, a 'call' is issued to students of religion to move beyond belief in their attempts to understand the religious dimension of man's existence. The 'call' has been sounded in the past in such work as R. Bellah's *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World*, (1970); and R. Needham's *Belief, Language and Experience*, (1972); and more recently in D. Z. Phillip's *Religion without Explanation*, (1976); and W. C. Smith's *Belief and History*, (1977).

It is not an easy matter to classify and analyze the arguments raised against 'belief' in these and other works. They are often confused in such a way that it is difficult to determine whether the criticism is the product of empirical reasoning, philosophical argument, or intuitive or religious insight. It is extremely important, to respond, however, for the 'call' to move beyond 'belief' amounts to a 'call' for a revolution in the study of religion — for a radical change of paradigm for interpreting the meaning of religious phenomena.¹ And like most revolutions, the undertaking would be costly. The initial step in such a response, given the presently irresolvable complexities in the multi-

* I wish to acknowledge here my indebtedness to my colleague Dr. T. Day for his critical reading of an earlier draft of this essay.

¹ The 'imagery' here, of course, is drawn from T. Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). I first suggested its applicability in this kind of context in a critical review article of R. Needham's *Belief, Language and Experience* (1974) — to his suggestion there that anthropology (and consequently the anthropological study of religion) rests on an unacceptable assumption about the nature of the human mind arising out of our uncritical use of the word (concept) belief.

faceted attack on the category of belief, can be taken in focussing critical attention on the arguments of Wilfred Cantwell Smith in *Belief and History* for Smith's central concern there is methodological.

My intention in reviewing Smith's *Belief and History*, therefore, is to argue in defence of 'Belief'. 'Belief' has been a ubiquitous feature of our discussions of religion, and still is today. To abandon its use as an interpretive category in the study of religion entails a wholesale reassessment of our generally accepted knowledge about religion in general and our generally accepted understandings of the various historical religious traditions specifically. Indeed, a rejection of 'belief' would involve an outright rejection of numerous works on the nature, function and meaning of religious thought. It would, further, entail setting aside as of little value to our understanding of religion the many analyses of the truth or falsity of their (alleged?) beliefs and belief systems. Much Western philosophy of religion and philosophical theology, one would have to conclude, is concerned with a pseudo-problem, that is, with a non-existent 'something called religious knowledge'. Such consequences, however, constitute a cost of such enormous character as would constitute a kind of argument against the proposal to eliminate the concept from 'religious studies'. This is not in itself an adequate argument against the proposed revolution but it does make the proposal appear counter-intuitive and counter-productive. Further, a call for a change of approach in the study of religion that demands so much of those to whom it appeals must be extraordinarily well delineated and supported. But I shall show in my review/analysis of Smith's arguments in *Belief and History* that it is not well argued. My critique of Smith, therefore will lend credence, I think, to the contrary claim that it is not possible to write an adequate 'history of religion(s)', or to undertake a 'comparative study of religion' without use of the concept (category) of belief.

II

Smith's arguments against 'belief' as an interpretive category in the study of religion are, in a sense, disarmingly simple. We have it seems, been bewitched in our use of the concept belief. 'Believing', Smith claims, originally meant 'having faith', not 'holding an opinion' and the change of meaning that now equates 'believing' with 'opining' is illegitimate and has simply gone undetected (Smith, 1977; 40). This

'lexical argument' is then supported by what one might refer to as a 'biblical argument' — that is, according to Smith the concept of belief is not a biblical concept and so is inapplicable in the interpretation of biblical religion and, by implication, of all of Christianity. (Smith, 1977; 77). Indeed, Smith suggests that similar analyses of the use of the word in other scriptural literature will yield the same conclusions.

Both of these arguments are raised in support of an apparently self-evident truth, namely, that religion is something essentially personal and esoteric and so a matter of the subjective experience of the individual (i.e., that it is a matter of 'faith') and not objectifiable (i.e., a matter of rites, rituals, social institutions, belief systems, etc., or any combination of them). The arguments I shall show are inadequate. Smith's intuition as to the essential nature of the 'religious phenomenon', however, does have value, but not, I shall argue, in the sense he thinks it does.

Smith's lexical argument runs as follows: what it means today 'to believe' is not what it use to mean. 'Believe' used to mean 'to pledge allegiance, to commit oneself, to give one's loyalty' so that the phrase 'belief in God' did not mean for the medieval religious what it means to us today. He admits that the 'belief' of the medieval presupposes God's existence, but that it is not a presupposition in the modern sense of that term. The creed for the medieval believer, consequently, was repeated 'performatively' and not as a description of some super-world, and yet Smith claims that such a believer "participated as did his fellows in an intellectual world-view that included the concept of 'God'." (Smith, 1977; 42). But if this is the case then surely the *concept* of 'belief' (in the modern sense) is necessary in an analysis of medieval religion. And Smith seems himself to recognize this, for he admits that one of the tasks of the student of religion is to infer and state the presuppositions of the religious, and that once stated, it makes sense to refer to them as beliefs. (Smith, 1977; 54). Nevertheless, Smith also suggests that such belief is a *mere* form of unconscious presupposing.

The medieval religious person's belief in God, however, is surely not merely a tacit or unconscious presupposition. Smith may be right to claim that when such a 'believer' said 'I believe in God' that he did not say it in our twentieth-century sense, or mean it in that sense, for he/she meant it in the sense of committing oneself to God. (In the terms of language analysis, the illocutionary force of his utterance was

commissive). But I think it obvious that if such a 'believer' had been asked whether he believed (in the twentieth-century sense) that God existed he would have understood the question and would have answered it in the affirmative. To ask him such a question would have puzzled him since God's existence was obvious. The question would be odd in the sense of the oddity of asking a modern man whether or not his wife really exists. The acceptance of the existence of one's wife is not a matter of 'weighing up pros and cons' but neither is it a tacit, *unconscious* 'pre'-supposition. It is simply a part of the generally accepted background knowledge with which we function. Smith's difficulty in recognizing this lies, I suggest, in his somewhat naive epistemology. For Smith knowledge is distinct from belief — a difference of kind and not merely in degree. And faith implies knowledge rather than belief. 'Knowledge' means certainty whereas 'belief' designates a hesitant state of mind (Smith, 1977; 56f). Indeed, Smith claims that 'belief' has in fact come to connote falsehood. (Smith, 1977; 65, 77). Since the 'belief' of religious believers is an act rather than a state of mind — namely an act of total surrender and commitment — it requires an absolute *intuition* of reality; of that to which surrender is made. This *intuition* Smith recognizes as a conceptual component of faith but he does not see it to involve any 'belief' in the modern sense of that term. Consequently he insists that "so far as its purely conceptual aspect is concerned, which for some thinkers loomed larger than for others, it signified not 'to believe' but 'to recognize'" (Smith, 1977; 41). To claim, however, that the 'believer' (medieval or otherwise) 'recognizes', 'sees', 'discerns', or 'knows' the reality to which he commits himself is extremely tendentious. If true, every 'believer' lives in a different universe — each true because it is the object of an intuition and not a mere belief — but then, as Smart has pointed out, "the ontological firmament becomes heavily populated, and rather inconsistently" (Smart, 1973; 60).

Smith becomes pluralistic here but not, I am afraid, without becoming entirely relativistic. (Smith, 1977; 29). The tension at this point in his thought, however, is easily overcome when it is recognized that knowing and believing are not distinct activities of the mind — that knowing is nothing more than believing (with subjective certainty, or near certainty) plus, so to speak, firm intersubjectively testable evidence attesting the claim to knowledge. It is no wonder, therefore, "... that

it is extraordinarily taxing for a modern not to hold that a medieval who 'believed in God' in the sense of actively giving Him his allegiance was also and therein believing in Him in today's sense of opinion that He is" (Smith, 1977; 42). This epistemological naivete, as I shall point out, also bedevils Smith's 'biblical argument' against the use of 'belief' as a category in the interpretation of religion.²

According to Smith 'belief', in the modern sense of that term, is simply not a Scriptural concept. There is no need here to examine at length his interpretations of the use of the word (concept) in specific biblical passages. He maintains that the word is never used in the modern twentieth-century sense, and suggests that translations of *pistis* read 'faith' rather than 'belief': "It is not to be supposed that the point I am making is trivial; or is merely linguistic. Faith precedes belief. To have reversed this order is a modern and a tragic heresy." (Smith, 1977; 78). And yet he recognizes, as this passage itself indicates, that such faith has an intellectual component; but he again refers to that aspect of faith as 'recognition', 'insight', 'discernment', etc. (Smith, 1977; 80).

The only way Smith can deny, then, that there is an element of believing here is to claim that the 'intellectual component' is knowledge (i.e., *epistēmē* as opposed to mere *doxa*) — absolutely certain knowledge. Smith wants to make such a claim and yet seems more hesitant about it here than in the context of his 'lexical argument'. The difficulties in which he finds himself embroiled over this matter become obvious in the following passages:

"The person in the New Testament who is primarily the focus of faith and the centre of the new concept is, of course, Christ. Many writers have set forth this, and I have nothing new to add — except perhaps once again to substract rather, a matter of believing anything; and to substitute, at the propositional level, *the thesis about recognizing*. The Christian movement arose not as a body of persons who believed that Jesus was the Christ, but as an upsurge of a new recognition in human history: a sudden *awareness* of what humanity can be . . . the dawning of a new *insight* . . . Participants in this movement did not think that they believed anything. And while their

² Space does not allow a rehearsal of the arguments here in support of an alternative and more adequate epistemology. I have done this to some extent, however, in my "'Comprehensively Critical Rationalism' and Commitment" (1973) and "Is Religious Belief Problematic?" (1977a). The possibility of a cognitivist interpretation of religion is also taken up in my "Explanation and Theological Method" (1976).

new *vision* of the world and of themselves was articulated in quite an array of new conceptual symbols, I am not sure that an historian wishing to apprehend what was going on should concentrate on those symbols, except as clues to something much deeper and more personal. *It is not what they believed that is significant, but the new faith that the belief-system [?] gave a pattern to, and was generated by.*" (Smith, 1977; 88 my emphases).

However, a few pages further on he talks *freely* of an 'unexpressed ideational content' of the faith in terms of 'belief' that expands upon the last passage just quoted:

"For the first time we arrive at something to which the word 'believe' might seem legitimately to apply; although after our discussion in the last chapter one may understand my malaise at using that overworked word for this realm. We would however, allow it in and still retain my suggestion of a new translation of the Bible quite omitting the tendentious term. The concept of believing does not occur within the Bible even if some matters do appear there that the twentieth-century critic may accuse the Biblical writers of tacitly believing *Obviously, if one thinks about it, one realizes that they believed in this sense all sorts of things that we do not; and that we believe in this sense all sorts of things that our grandchildren will not. In this sense, one might toss out an aphorism: one's faith is given by God one's beliefs by one's century.*" (Smith, 1977; 95, 96 my emphasis).

In the first of these passages Smith suggests an intimate connection, (perhaps a kind of causal connection) between 'faith' and the belief system whereas in the latter there is, seemingly, no connection at all. Smith recognizes that religion — the religious experience, personal faith — invariably finds itself expressed in propositional form (as well as in other 'externalizations' such as rites, ritual, practice, social institutions, etc.) and yet wishes to maintain that an understanding of religion cannot be achieved through an understanding of such expressions of the faith. Faith is from God — the expressions of that faith from one's culture. But the paradox is obvious — how can we know that the expressions are in fact expressions of the faith? How 'faithful' (accurate) must those expression be to the real inner faith to be expressions of that faith? It is difficult to conceive, if expression has any intrinsic connection to the faith it expresses, how faith and expression have such different sources.

Smith's injunctions here against the category of belief seem to be a recapitulation of his concerns expressed in his earlier attack on the concept of 'religion'. In *The Meaning and End of Religion* (1962) he insisted that the concept 'religion' be replaced by the two concepts of 'cumulative tradition' and 'inner faith'. *Real* religion, he insists there,

concerns the inner faith of the individual person and not the external expression, for religion is a matter of inner experience and decision which involves persons in a relationship to that which is Ultimate.

'Religion', he proceeds to argue, originally meant something like 'piety' or 'personal religious vision', etc. For Augustine, for example, religion is not, he claims, a system of beliefs and practices but personal confrontation with God — an inner attitude and transcendental orientation. With the gradual loss of such experience, he suggests, attention was focused rather on the 'products' of such 'religion', thus inaugurating what he calls 'the process of reification' which made of religion an objective entity. He admits that in Islam the concept of religion as a system of beliefs is, in part, written into the 'vision' but denies that Islam is on that account a counter-example to his thesis, for even here the 'pre-reifying' interpretation of '*islam*' means not system but personal experience: "If we look carefully at the Qur'an, we find, first of all that the term *islam* there is relatively much less used than are other related but more dynamic and personal terms and, secondly, that when it is used it can be, and on many grounds almost must be, interpreted not as the name of a religious system, but as the designation of a decisive personal act." (Smith, 1962; 110).

For Smith, then, the concept of religion is inadequate both for the believer and for the observer/student. It is so for the believer because the concept focusses on the mundane rather than upon the supernatural and so distracts from the religiousness it was meant to 'reveal'. It is inadequate for the observer, on the other hand, for "the observer's concept of a religion is by definition constituted of what can be 'observed'. Yet the whole path and substance of religious life lies in its relation to what cannot be observed." (Smith, 1962; 136).

Smith's problems here resemble those generated by his attack on 'belief'. Scientific analysis, that is, can treat *religion* only but cannot get at *faith*, for faith is not an object that can be examined. Yet faith is the origin of tradition and although it cannot itself be studied directly, it would seem that knowledge of the tradition *based* on it would provide us clues about the nature of faith. But this is not the case, Smith argues, for "a preliminary insistence [in the study of religion] must be that when any of these things is an expression of religious faith, then it cannot be fully understood except as an expression of religious faith." (Smith, 1962; 171). If Smith's conception of 'religion'

as 'faith plus tradition' is true, then the scholarly study of religion is impossible for on this account either religion is *totally* esoteric and hence not open to objective ('scientific' or 'intersubjective', etc.) study, or, because we want to undertake a scholarly study of religion we wind up 'objectifying' what is essentially subjective and thereby fundamentally distorting what it is we wish to understand and so, again, wind up not studying religion.

But Smith himself is not ready to accept such a conclusion for he in no way wishes to deny the possibility of a scholarly and even 'scientific' study of religion. He is forced therefore to give way somewhat on his radical distinction between faith and tradition. He does it however in such a way that the retreat is hardly noticeable. Nevertheless the change of position is there. In *The Meaning and End of Religion*, for example, he claims that tradition is an expression of faith and that, further, what goes on 'in the mind and heart of another can be known' that is, it can be known *through* an understanding of the tradition. (Smith, 1962; 188/9). And in *Belief and History* he finds himself talking of the *demand* of faith laid upon one to conceptually elucidate the faith; it is "an inescapable obligation". (Smith, 1977; 99). Such conceptual elucidations are the 'stuff' of traditions and the 'stuff' of traditions, as history shows us, is belief. Reference to such concepts then, both by the believer in the elucidation of the faith and by the student of religion as a means whereby he might probe more deeply into the nature of faith indicates, I think, the importance of the concept of belief religiously and for the interpreter of religion. Critical discussion, I suggest therefore, would have been more appropriate if Smith had applied it to clarifying the meaning and range of application of the concept rather than in an attempt to dissuade us from its use.

III

It is not only Smith's arguments against belief that are found wanting. It may be instructive here to take a brief look at the proposals urged upon the student of religion by Robert Bellah. (1970), for Bellah also argues that the retention of the concept in the interpretive schema of the scholar *inevitably* involves one in a fundamental misapprehension of the essential nature of the religious phenomenon. This 'truth' it seems is intuitively obvious requiring little or no argument. Yet in making the claim Bellah does make passing reference to 'empirical

facts' — to the degeneration of original (esoteric?) christian thought in the West (under the influence of Greek philosophy), for example, and to the non-cognitive character of Oriental religion. Whether such empirical claims stand up to scrutiny and support Bellah's intuition, however, is another matter altogether. Bellah's argument reads as follows:

"It is my contention that what I would call 'the objectivist fallacy', namely the confusion of belief and religion which is found only in the religious traditions deeply influenced by Greek thought — Christianity and Islam — and is almost completely missing in China and India, involves a fundamental misapprehension of the nature of religion, both the religion of the masses and of the cultural elite A great and influential religion like Zen Buddhism, for example denied the value of any beliefs at all, and Taoism showed the same tendency." (Bellah, 1970; 220, 222).

Bellah's claim that the significance of the concept of belief in the Christian West indicates a degeneration of Christian faith and his further claim as to the non-cognitive character of Oriental belief constitute a kind of empirical argument against the scholar's use of the category of belief. However, his suggestion begs a very important question or two, even given his assessment of the nature of both Western and non-Western religions. No argument, for example is given for the assumption that the change of 'style' in the Christian tradition is degeneration rather than development. Similarly no argument is provided for the assumption that Zen Buddhism is a better measure of what is truly religious than Christianity, medieval or modern. It would seem that Bellah proceeds here on an intuitive rather than an empirical basis. Be that as it may, Bellah's assumptions and argument find little support from historical and scientific or phenomenological studies of religion and religions. According to Smart, (1969) for example, all religions seem to reveal a complex structure involving at least six different factors, two of which are mythology and doctrine. All religious practices and rites, it appears, are intimately associated with stories or myths and "doctrines are an attempt to give system, clarity and intellectual power to what is revealed through the mythological and symbolic language." (Smart, 1969; 19). Indeed, Smart goes on to claim that the distinction between myth and doctrine is of critical significance for the student of religion, "because the world religions owe

some of their living power to their success in presenting a total picture of reality, through a coherent system of doctrines." (Smart, 1969; 19).

To claim that such a concern with explicit belief is an illegitimate, because late, development is a *non-sequitur*. Surely at most one can argue that early and late Christian thought represent two kinds of Christian responses to religious experience and not that one is pure and the other degenerate — unless of course some assumption of the purity of the primitive state is unconsciously adopted, or, worse, one assumes that any concern on the part of religion with cognitive matters rather than spiritual and personal matters is a degeneration; but that would simply be a begging of the question at hand.³ There are good grounds for supposing the cognitive concern of late Christian thought not to be a change of direction from the concerns of the primitive Christian community. Robin Horton, (1973) for example, argues persuasively that the intellectual and speculative interest has always been a central facet of Christian thought. Christian thought, that is, has always had a theoretical character — a concern for the articulation of a set of beliefs explanatory of the world in which it finds itself. (Horton, 1973; 299).⁴

A fuller argument from the non-cognitivist quarter suggests that religion is not concerned with cognitive matters at all, but rather with personal matters and that, consequently, belief is of little or no concern to the religious person.⁵ There is no question but that religion is concerned with uncovering 'a way of life' and not merely with 'science'. And yet its concern with that way of life is simultaneously a cognitive

³ On this point see R. L. Wilken's *The Myth of Christian Beginnings: History's Impact on Belief*, (1971).

⁴ Intellectualism of this sort has often been attacked in recent years by symbol-oriented anthropologists: J. Beattie's discussion in *Other Cultures* (1964) is representative. An excellent analysis of the intellectualists position is provided by J. Skorupski in *Symbol and Theory: A Philosophical Study of Theories of Religion in Social Anthropology* (1976). See also I. Jarvie, *The Revolution in Anthropology* (1969). In an attack on the intellectualist position in anthropology R. Needham, in *Belief, Language and Experience* (1972), argues that the approach is unacceptable because there are societies in which the concept of belief does not appear. Even though Needham applies this argument to traditional rather than world religions, his thesis, if established, would very much strengthen the attack on 'belief' under discussion here. I have subjected that argument to critical scrutiny in a review article (1974) and, I think, have shown his conclusions to be unwarranted.

concern. As one philosopher puts it, 'religion has an intellectual as well as a moral component. It is not a way of life imposed upon a state of affairs; it is a way of life with a conviction about a state of affairs built into it.' (Gibson, 1970; 12). Religious thinking then, to be sure, has other concerns besides epistemological ones but it seems that the 'other' concerns are inextricably bound up with our relationship to a reality beyond ourselves; that the 'reality interest' (Farmer, 1942) is central to 'the way of life'. One might legitimately refer to assertions of belief by a religious person, therefore, as expressions of commitment but that 'description' would be elliptical for 'commitment' merely points to an attitude a person takes up with respect to a particular belief or set of beliefs. As John Hick, in an analysis of faith and knowledge (belief) points out, "Faith as trust (fiducia) presupposes faith (fides) as cognition of the object of that trust." (Hick, 1966; 4). An examination of religion(s) indicates then that the affect of religious experience in general induces or confirms belief. As McPherson points out in his *Philosophy and Religious Belief* (1974) it would not be possible to give an account of religious experience without also being able to say what it was an experience of. (McPherson, 1974; 4). And William Christian in a profoundly detailed analysis of religious discourse makes a similar remark *vis a vis* the non-cognitivist who emphasizes the fact that religious discourse is largely, or perhaps even wholly, made up of non-propositional expressions. (Christian, 1964; 136 and 141).⁶

The conclusion seems inescapable; to talk of religion is to talk of, besides commitments, ideas, interpretations and doctrines, etc.

Some comments about Bellah's remarks as to the non-cognitive character of oriental religions is also called for. It seems to me that no religion, or people, as I have argued above, ever ceases to think and

⁵ I have subjected the non-cognitivist interpretation of religion to close analysis in a recently completed but as yet unpublished book manuscript entitled "Religion and Truth: Towards an Alternative Paradigm for the Study of Religion". Some of this material appears in a less detailed form in my "Truth and the Study of Religion" (1977b).

⁶ Time does not allow detailed study of the relation of belief to the question of the truth of religion here. I have attempted elsewhere (see my above mentioned 1977b) to show that the truth-question is, in a very important sense, meaningless outside a cognitive conception of religion, a crucial issue, as I point out there, that is overlooked by Professor Smith. For a similar argument about Christian thought in particular see, *inter alia*, W. Pannenberg's *Theology and the Philosophy of Science* (1976).

that religious experience inevitably finds itself embodied in rational reflection. I do not mean by this to suggest that religion can be simply identified with some straightforward metaphysical position so that a simple refutation of doctrine would lead to the 'refutation' of a religion. Religious beliefs in any case, because of their extreme complexity and the mysterious nature of the reality ('the totality of meaning') with which they are concerned, are extremely hard to 'refute', as is to be expected. To claim therefore that Oriental religions are difficult to 'refute' would cause no problem but to claim that these religions involve no metaphysical views whatsoever and so are not at all open to some kind of 'refutation' (falsification) is quite another issue. Indeed, as Hocking noted some years ago, "one of the most striking traits of the Far Eastern religions as distinct from those of the Near East is their reflective character". He goes on to point out that "the religions of China are at the same time philosophies [and that] from the time of the Upanishads the Indian scriptures move in the atmosphere of thought and argument." (Hocking, 1940; 94). And a cursory perusal of that literature shows metaphysics to constitute a central portion of it.

Such a description does not, of course, adequately apply to all Oriental religions. Certainly the Buddhism of Nāgārjuna or the later developments of Chan and Zen in China and Japan give some support to Bellah's claim, namely that we have here argument without metaphysics and, consequently that religion is beyond cognition. But I think, nevertheless, that Bellah's understanding of these traditions is faulty. Although Nāgārjuna in his fourfold negation of 'views', for example, has the explicit intention of decimating *all* views and so, at least on the surface, seems to refrain from replacing that decimation of views with yet another view, the *catuṣkoṭi* nevertheless does *point* to 'something' beyond all views that requires a specific kind of response on the part of the reader of the *kārikās*. Nāgārjuna's 'position', that is, is easily distinguished from Nihilism pure and simple. The action, commitment, transformation or whatever is expected *suggests* a 'world-view', if even only in implicit form and perhaps even 'inexpressible', that is radically different to that of the Nihilist. Nāgārjuna's negation, then, is no Nihilism; it does not point to nothingness but rather to the Nothing, to Voidness (*śūnyatā*). What we have in Nāgārjuna therefore might, perhaps, be called a 'formless supernaturalism' (Hocking, 1940; 72, 73).

It would seem that Zen Buddhism, in its attempt to break the control

of language and thought over the mind, constitutes an obvious case of non-cognitivist religion. But again the question arises as to the rationale of the institutional expression of such an anarchic 'view' in the structure and activity of the Zen Community. One might reasonably suppose that such an institutionalized rejection of language and thought is *meant* to *show* something of peculiar significance about the 'world' in which men live. Nor is it entirely unreasonable, I think, to ask whether the 'claim' that all language and thought distorts the true nature of ultimate reality (or perhaps better, distorts our knowledge as to the true nature of ultimate reality), is itself a cognitive claim about the true nature of ultimate reality — namely that ultimate reality lies beyond the bounds of sense and thought.

I find it necessary here to repeat my claim that I have no intention of denying the point that many of the non-cognitivists wish to make, namely that religion is not simply a cognitive interest in 'the world'. The understanding of religion in the East as primarily a call to a particular form of life is entirely reasonable. Religion is convictional and a matter of praxis as has so often been pointed out by philosophers and theologians, but this acceptance of the practical nature of religious commitment does not necessarily preclude its cognitive character. Indeed, I have been arguing that the conscious adoption of a particular life-style, whether Zen-like or of any other character, if it is not to be entirely arbitrary and irrational, involves, even if only implicitly, the acceptance of a 'theory' or 'understanding' of the nature and meaning of the universe. Religion, that is, as a kind of valuing, is a conscious activity that finds its expression in the ideational aspect of a man's life which indicates that 'doctrine', even if it turns out to be derivative from other aspects of the religious phenomenon, is still of the essence of religion.

One can agree that belief as conscious mental assent does not make the 'adherents' of any particular tradition religious without denying that belief is still a significant element of being religious, for belief exists not merely as conscious mental state but can also exist as disposition.⁷ To utter the phrase 'God is love' may be less a proposition in search of assent than an indication of an attitude towards life. But

⁷ See for example R. J. Ackerman's *Belief and Knowledge* (1972) or H. H. Price's *Belief* (1969).

it is obvious that it could be both. Indeed, it is hard to say exactly what one means unless it is both. Furthermore, it is equally obvious that one might adopt the same attitude (acquire the same disposition) without ever consciously entertaining the proposition.⁸ Consequently one might be a believer in disposition, rather than in mind. To have 'faith' therefore, even in Smith's sense of the word, is to believe but to believe is not a sufficient condition of faith.⁹ Thus the religious may not emphasize this aspect of 'faith' at all, or may even quite deliberately 'de-value' (de-emphasize) it, but the task of the philosopher of religion, as Ferré points out for example, is to "extract unformulated propositions from practices and make clear the *implied* belief-claims on which the reasonableness of religion depends." (Ferré, 1967; 89). And McPherson in similar vein points out that "to describe a belief as a commitment or an affirmation of trust, or something of the sort, does not in itself preclude the raising of questions about the grounds of that belief." (McPherson, 1974; 121).

IV

It has become obvious in the process of the analysis of the arguments against 'belief' undertaken here, that the proposal to ban the use of the category in the scholarly study of religion is not only counter-intuitive but is, in fact, unwarranted. And the counter-proposal to use more personalist, non-objectifying categories, (e.g. faith) shows little promise of bearing fruit.¹⁰ Indeed, the dangers of subjectivism inherent in this kind of approach to the study of religion are very real. Relativism would be inevitable for understanding the religion of another within

⁸ See here M. Yinger's distinction between doctrinal and non-doctrinal belief in his "Substructures of Religion" (1977).

⁹ See for example the story of the sheep and the goats in the Gospel of Mathew Chapter 25), as well as Baillie's reference to Bertrand Russell as an atheist at the top of his head but a Christian in the depth of his heart in his *Our Knowledge of God* (1939). See also Ignace Lepp's last chapter, "the Unbelief of Believers" in his *Atheism in Our Time* (1963) and Chapter nine of M. E. Marty's *Varieties of Unbelief* (1964).

¹⁰ Some possibility of reclaiming Smith's 'personalist approach' to the study of religion has been suggested in a recent, as yet unpublished, paper by T. Day on "Paradigms of Religion" (1978). Day's talk of 'model persons' would help avoid the worst subjectivism and relativism implicit in Smith's approach to religion. I am afraid, however, that Smith would find the proposal unacceptable because of the *structure* of such an approach and its inherent 'objectification' of religion.

such a personalist framework for it seems to require the student to undergo conversion to the tradition being examined. In terms of the aim of the academic study of religion, namely the accumulation of intersubjectively testable knowledge of religions, therefore, this call for a radical change of paradigm governing such study must be rejected as being counter-productive. The objection that use of objective categories involves a naïve subservience to positivism in the study of religion has just not been borne out in the argument against belief.

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HISTORIES OF RELIGION

R. J. Z. WERBLOWSKY

It is a strange phenomenon, perhaps itself in need of historical explanation, that "histories of religion" seem to come in waves. After periods of relative quiescence the market is suddenly swamped with smaller or larger "handbooks" viz. manuals, and with shorter or more ambitious series ranging from two or three to up to twenty or so volumes. All these in addition to the many so-called "introductions" to the history, phenomenology, sociology etc. of religions. Thus the sixties and early seventies have seen the almost simultaneous appearance of several standard histories of religion in Italian, English, French and German (the latter including also a revised and translated version of a Danish original). An excellent critical survey of this avalanche has been given by Kurt Rudolph in *Theologische Literaturzeitung* vol. 98 (1973), pp. 402-418. The present article will review only two of the more recent series.

The 3-volume French *Histoire des Religions* edited by H-Ch. Puech¹ is now complete with the appearance of vol. iii in 1976. The series represents an attempt to do justice to both the phenomenological and historical requirements of the subject and provides an excellent and up-to-date summary and survey of the whole field. It has been wisely observed that whereas a proper "phenomenology of religion" must be the work of a single author, a history of religions — unless it is a piece of popular *vulgarisation* — must necessarily be the combined effort of a team of experts. Its unity, to the extent that such unity is possible at all, should be the result of the editor's strong guiding hand. In fact, only very few individual authors have been able to produce relatively satisfactory introductions to all the (major) religions of the world, and perhaps Ninian Smart's *The Religious Experience of Mankind* is one of the more successful attempts in this genre. The series under review is uncompromisingly scholarly, and whilst it must needs forego detailed

¹ *Histoire des Religions*, sous la direction d'Henri-Charles Puech, in the series *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade*, Gallimard, Paris. Vol. i (1970) pp. 1488; vol. ii (1972) pp. 1596; vol. iii (1976) pp. 1460.

technicalities it at least succeeds in presenting and integrating the present state of scholarship and research. The arrangement of the material itself already implies a more modern approach. The series does not begin (as did some older manuals) with "primitive religions" but postpones, in an implicit turning away from evolutionist modes of presentation, *les religions chez les peuples sans tradition écrite* (pre-historic hypotheses, Black Africa, Oceania, the Americas, Arctic and Altaic religions) to vol. iii. This section in vol. iii is preceded by an account of the later developments of the "founded religions" (Islam; modern Hinduism; Buddhism in Ceylon, South-East Asia and Vietnam; China, Korea and Japan) and followed by chapters on modern "acculturative" cults and movements. It is, perhaps, significant for the style and pre-occupations of French scholarship in the field of *Histoire des Religions* that after the General Editor's excellent preface — almost a kind of miniphenomenology (vol. i, pp. vii-xxvii) — the first chapter, the basic phenomenological introduction as it were, had to be provided by an Italian scholar, the late Angelo Brelich (*Prolégomènes à une Histoire des Religions*, vol. i, pp. 3-59). The last chapter, a critical survey of the history and present state of the art of *L'Histoire des Religions* (vol. iii, pp. 1279-1328) is done expertly and competently by Michel Meslin of the Sorbonne.

In between these opening and closing chapters we have the whole gamut of the world's religions, divided (or should we say "chopped up"?) according to criteria which may invite discussion but where a General Editor has no choice but to take at times drastic decisions. Thus vol. i deals with the religions of antiquity (including Egypt; the ancient Near Eastern, Elamite, Western Semitic and Israelite religions; Greek, Vedic, Zoroastrian, Slav, Baltic, German, Celtic, Etruscan and Roman religions as well as ancient China and Japan) as well as with the origins of the "universal religions and religions of salvation" in India and the Far East (i.e., Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Taoism, as well as Chinese and Japanese Buddhism). Vol. ii continues the same category but in the near eastern and mediterranean setting (Sassanian and Mazdaean religion; oriental cults in the Roman Empire; the end of paganism; Judaism from the Babylonian exile to the Bar Kokhba revolt; Christianity till Nicaea; Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Mandaeism, Manichaeism, and the beginning of Islam) and then proceeds to the "founded religions" in the West; later Judaism; western Christianity

from Nicaea to the Reformation; non-orthodox oriental Christianity; the Reformation and Protestantism; the Orthodox Church; post-Tridentine Catholicism; Catholic and Protestant missions; western non-conformism; and esoteric currents including spiritualism, theosophy and free-masonry. Shortage of space precludes an enumeration by name of the illustrious authors of the aforementioned chapters.

Each volume is superbly indexed and the whole series is, also from the point of view of printing and production, in keeping with the standards to which readers of the *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade* series have become accustomed and which by now they have come to take for granted. If complain one must, then the complaint is one which can be directed at all the *Pléiade* volumes: whilst the format is handy, the volumes are too thick and the paper too thin to make useful (in the sense of "rough") working tools. But they are a pleasure to handle and to read.

Most scholars engaged in the study of religions are also engaged in teaching the subject — whether on the High School, undergraduate or graduate levels. Books whose avowed purpose is to serve as aids or manuals for classroom teaching (or for private reading by interested individuals) therefore deserve to be taken note of. One of the most successful efforts in this *genre* is *The Religious Life of Man* series published under the general editorship of Prof. F. Streng.² The fact that this series has, within a few years, been re-published in a second edition (many of its volumes in an improved and augmented form) is not only evidence of its quality but also proof that it fills a real need. As a matter of fact the series consists of two complementary series. The one a straightforward History of Religions series, the other a series of selected "Sources and Interpretations" i.e., annotated anthologies. The General Editor, Prof. Streng, has contributed a kind of general introduction³ which is actually a very useful and illuminating introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion. Islam is described and interpreted with erudition and sensitivity by Bishop Cragg⁴ whilst the

² *The Religious Life of Men*, General Editor F. Streng, publ. by the Dickenson Publishing Co. (Encino, Calif. and Belmont, Calif.). The European representatives are the Wadsworth Group, c/o Proost en Brandt N.V., 63 Strijkviertel, 2543 De Meern (Utrecht), The Netherlands.

³ Frederick F. Streng, *Understanding Religious Life*, 2nd ed., 1976, pp. 207.

⁴ K. Cragg, *The House of Islam*, 2nd ed., 1975, pp. 245.

Japanese religions are presented competently and in a most helpful manner that manages to bring order into (and not to impose it artificially on!) a subject that is generally known as one of the most confusing, by Prof. Byron Earhart.⁵ The reader gratefully notes the singular in the title: Japanese Religion (and not religions). The companion volume⁶ is equally useful and well done, though inevitably also tantalizingly inadequate, like every selection — even the best. Chinese religion too (in the singular) is valiantly summarised — without chopping it up into Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism etc. — by Prof. Thompson⁷ who has, moreover, enriched the second ed. by chapters on the “Festival Year” and on “Disruption of the Tradition” (the latter an expansion of the brief postscript at the end of the first ed.). The volume on Buddhism, good as it was, yet remained very much in need of re-writing and supplementing, especially with a view to the needs of undergraduate students. After the premature and tragic death of the author, the late R. H. Robinson, this delicate task was successfully undertaken by Prof. Johnson, and the result can be called an unqualified success.⁸ Judaism is presented in a masterful and original manner by J. Neusner who succeeds in giving his “introduction” a character that makes it significantly different from the plethora of books on Judaism that have inundated the market in recent years.⁹ The companion volume, though not free from idiosyncrasies, is equally superb.¹⁰ The volume on Hinduism (no second ed. yet) takes us from the early Indus Civilisation, through early Aryan religion (including the Aryan Fire Sacrifice) to the Vedic view of sacrifice, ritual (including ritual magic) and the cosmos, and on to the Upanishads, the subsequent changes and challenges, the new brahmanical synthesis, the religion of the epics and the puranas, the late puranic religion and the emergence of the “full tradition”. The final chapter, though dealing also with movements of reform, is appropriately entitled “The Continuing Tradi-

⁵ Byron H. Earhart, *Japanese Religion: Unity and Diversity*, 2nd ed., pp. 148.

⁶ B. Earhart, *Religion in the Japanese Experience: Sources and Interpretations*, 1974, pp. 270.

⁷ L. G. Thompson, *Chinese Religion: an Introduction*, 2nd ed., 1975, pp. 138.

⁸ R. H. Robinson and W. L. Johnson, *The Buddhist Religion*, 2nd ed., 1977, pp. 243.

⁹ J. Neusner, *The Way of Torah: an Introduction to Judaism*, 2nd ed., 1974, pp. 126.

¹⁰ J. Neusner, *The Life of Torah: Readings in the Jewish Religious Experience*, 1974, pp. 237.

tion".¹¹ It would be strange if such an excellent series lacked a volume on Christianity. This has also been provided and can be strongly recommended to Christians and non-Christians alike.¹²

Historians of religion are, by definition, historians, even though they have chosen one very specific slice or dimension of history as their field of interest. Hence developments in the methodology, styles and emphases of historical studies are, or at least should be, of immediate relevance to them. In this connection it may be useful to draw attention to Michel de Certeau's stimulating contribution¹³ which, incidentally, also contains some pages of immediate interest to historians of religion (e.g. pt. iv *Ecritures Freudiennes* and the chapters in pt. ii on the 17th and 18th cent. religious history in the West). Far more ambitious are the three volumes edited by LeGoff and Nora.¹⁴ It is impossible to summarise in a brief review the richness, fecundity, but also frustration conveyed by these chapters. Historians of religion will find much of interest in the double chapter *La Religion* in vol. ii (pp. 105-167), to wit *Anthropologie Religieuse* (Alphonse Dupront) and *Histoire Religieuse* (Dominique Julia).

The relationship of historians of religion to their subject is one of special complexity since it includes, among other things, also the relationship of the religions which they study to history viz. to the concept, notion or category of "history", the time-process, eschatology, *Urzeit* and *Endzeit* etc. Discussions of this fascinating and intriguing subject (which may also include the secular messianisms, millenarianisms and utopianisms) range from the purely descriptive to the philosophical and theological. The late Ernst Benz (see obituary notice in NUMEN XXVI, 122-123) — one of the most erudite and prolific scholars in our generation — published shortly before his death an essay (originally a lecture) on the "acceleration of time".¹⁵ The

¹¹ Th. J. Hopkins, *The Hindu Religious Tradition*, 1971, pp. 156.

¹² Stephen Reynolds, *The Christian Religious Tradition*, 1977, pp. 237.

¹³ M. de Certeau, *L'écriture de l'histoire*, Paris, Gallimard, 1975, pp. 361.

¹⁴ *Faire de l'Histoire*, sous la direction de Jacques Le Goff et Pierre Nora, Paris, Gallimard, 1974, 3 volumes. Vol. i; *Nouveaux problèmes*, pp. 231; vol. ii: *Nouvelles approches*, pp. 253; vol. iii: *Nouveaux objets*, pp. 283.

¹⁵ Ernst Benz, *Akzeleration der Zeit als geschichtliches und heilsgeschichtliches Problem*, Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Mainz (Abhandl. d. Geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, Jahrg. 1977, Nr. 2). Franz Steiner Verl., Wiesbaden, 1977, pp. 33.

problem is well posed by Benz, but unfortunately the (otherwise extremely interesting and instructive) discussion seems to go off at a tangent, since what Prof. Benz really discusses is the acute sense of the dwindling shortness of remaining historical time due to imminent *Naherwartung*, and not so much the problem of acceleration as such. The latter problem was first clearly and explicitly perceived (to this reviewer's knowledge) by the 18th century French thinker Turgot — often lumped together with the “physiocrats” — who realised that every step in historical, scientific-technical evolution accelerated the process as a whole and the velocity with which the next step would be taken. It was Turgot who first sensed what the present generation experiences, sometimes in an apocalyptic mood, as galloping history.

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BOOK REVIEWS

ESCHMANN, Anncharlott, *Das religiöse Geschichtsbild der Azteken*, Indiana, Beiheft 4 — Berlin, Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1976, 371 p.

A widespread belief among the peoples of the West and those influenced by them holds that only the Biblical religions are truly historical, that only they have historical revelations, and that the course of history justifies this belief. Non-Western peoples, whether highly civilized societies or simple, primitive ones, are lumped together as non-historical, living in a cyclical pattern of ritual that corresponds to the natural repetitions of the seasons and the movements of the heavenly bodies, without historical significance.

A number of studies shows the gross oversimplification of this position. It has been pointed out that the intervention of the gods in human affairs was a common trait among ancient Near Eastern peoples, that Biblical liturgy also retains patterns of repetition inherited from older, "natural," religions, that some highly civilized non-Biblical societies interpreted their contacts with the Western world according to their own views of human affairs, which was their own version of history, not necessarily like the rectilinear Western or the cyclical primitive. But all these studies have been ineffectual in changing the well-established image of world history as dominated by the Biblical conception of history.

The book of Anncharlott Eschmann, a student of professor G. Lanczkowski, is a serious investigation of the Aztec view of history in relation to Aztec religion, contributing new insights that provide a better understanding of Aztec thought and a sharper criticism of the view of history still prevalent in the Western world.

The author bases her study on the Nahuatl text written in Roman characters shortly after the Conquest, Aztec codices, and Spanish chronicles. Although these sources contain here and there mythological accounts of Aztec affairs, there is, in the opinion of the author, a basic historical assumption underlying all of them: the Aztec rule beginning with Izcoatl (1421-1440). A common point made by most sources is that the Aztec gods such as Huitzilopochtli, Quetzalcoatl, and Tezcatlipoca, preside over the history of the tribes from the beginning. The gods are thus responsible for the creation of the world and the conduct of history in a process of *creatio continua*, engaging both gods and men. The intervention of the gods can follow three different patterns: (1) transcendental revelations of a prophetic type; (2) the presence of the god is indicated by a signal, as the *tlaquimilolli* or sacred bundle; (3) the gods intervene through certain persons or *teixiptla*, images, a

special kind of incarnation: the gods appear for a brief period of time in different shapes related to the soothsayings of the *nahualli* or magicians. The interplay of both functions, *teixiptla* and *nahualli*, is particularly revealing of the Aztec kings' reaction to the Spanish Conquest, where the teachings of Quetzalcoatl (refuge in the Beyond), Tezcatlipoca (recourse to magic), and Huitzilopochtli (armed resistance) are keys to the understanding of Moctezuma's and Cuauhtemoc's behavior. The Aztec concept of history combines the belief in the free action of the gods and the regular intervention of time as a conditioning factor. The model is not just a cycle or a straight line but rather a spiral. It is evident that Aztec mythology is not only an explanation of what happened *in illo tempore* but also a dynamic source of inspiration for further creations in the course of historical time.

The importance of this book is twofold. On the one hand, it offers a clear image of the relationship between Aztec mythology, Aztec religion, and the Aztec idea of history, showing that the widely accepted antinomy of cyclic (mythic) and linear (historical) time is not valid in this case. On the other hand, it supplies useful observations about the more general problem of the relationship between time, history, and revelation, a subject that nobody interested in Biblical religions can consider irrelevant.

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Malalasekera Commemoration Volume, ed. by O. H. de A. Wijesekera and published by The Malalasekera Commemoration Volume Editorial Committee (as from Dept. of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Ceylon, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka) — Colombo, 1976, 362 p.

Jubilee and Commemoration volumes are notoriously difficult to review, even when the editors try to avoid excessive heterogeneity and concentrate on a relatively narrow field of studies. Some volumes also have a particularly tragic history since they were originally conceived as *Festschriften* but whilst still "in the works" the subject of the celebration passed away (sometimes prematurely and in tragic circumstances, as in the case of the late Prof. Brandon: the projected *Festschrift* appeared in 1973 as *Man and his Salvation: Studies in Memory of S. G. F. Brandon*). The present volume was planned as a Felicitation Volume, but Prof. G. P. Malalasekera's untimely death in 1973, at the age of 73, resulted in this collection of Pali, Sinhalese and Buddhist studies appearing as a Commemoration Volume. As it happened the release of the book was further delayed (it actually appeared in 1977), so that the date given on the title-page (1976) is misleading.

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G. P. Malalasekera had a distinguished career as a statesman, civil servant, organiser, popular apologist of modern Buddhism as well as a leading Pali and Buddhist scholar. The main stages of his career are listed at the beginning of the volume (pp. vii-ix) and so are some of his publications, both scholarly and popular (pp. x-xii). It is to be regretted that the editors did not provide a complete bibliography of Malalasekera's writings — a feature which would have much enhanced the value of this Memorial Volume — but merely a selection. The 362 pages of the volume contain thirty-three papers i.e., an average of eleven pages per article, with some papers being much shorter (though not necessarily the less valuable) whilst some longer ones do not rise above the level of journalism and *Publizistik*. Not that there is anything intrinsically wrong with first-class journalism, and the present reviewer found H. A. J. Hulugalle's contribution "Journalism and Scholarship" (pp. 141-147) one of the most fascinating. D. Kalupahana's "The Early Buddhist Theory of Causality" (pp. 171-179) is a summary of part of the argument presented elsewhere more fully and in book-length by the author (D. Kalupahana, *Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, 1975). It is in the nature of composite volumes to be somewhat unbalanced, yet the quality and standing of many of the contributors (among them P. K. Agrawala, André Bareau, H. Bechert, J. D. Dhivasekera, I. B. Horner, Lewis Lancaster, Alex Wayman, O. H. de A. Wijesekera, C. Witanachchi) make this volume a valuable contribution to Buddhist studies as well as a worthy tribute to a scholar who will long be remembered not only by his direct and personal influence as a teacher and author, but also as the initiator and *spiritus rector* of the still incomplete but ongoing great *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*.

R. J. Z. WERBLOWSKY

OKANO, Haruko, *Die Stellung der Frau im Shintō — eine religionsphänomenologische und -soziologische Untersuchung* — Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz, 1976, XVI + 236 S. DM 68.—.

Diese ursprünglich wohl als Doktordissertation abgefasste Arbeit erschien als Band 1 der von Walter Heissig und Hans-Joachim Klimkeit herausgegebenen Serie *Studies in Oriental Religions*. Wie wir dem Vorwort der Herausgeber entnehmen, soll diese Serie "in der Verbindung mit der Arbeit am historischen und empirischen Material" religionswissenschaftliche Fragen behandeln, die "die moderne Welt direkt oder indirekt tangieren", wobei vor allem "die Religionen in der Begegnung in Geschichte und Gegenwart und die Religionen in der modernen Welt" anvisiert werden (Zitate S. XIII).

Nach einer kurzen Einleitung, einer Übersicht des historischen

Quellenmaterials und einer begrifflichen Abklärung des "Miko-Komplexes", von dem das Buch handelt, gliedert die Verfasserin ihren Stoff in drei grosse Abschnitte: 1. der historische Rahmen (S. 13-69); 2. eine religionsphänomenologische und -soziologische Untersuchung (S. 71-185), und 3. der Versuch einer Typologie (S. 187-205). Die drei Abschnitte sind in einer sorgfältig strukturierten Weise so unterteilt, dass die einzelnen Teile — und damit die Themen — eines Abschnittes des öfteren zu jenen der anderen Abschnitte in Bezug gesetzt werden. Es ist der Verfasserin dabei gelungen, die Gefahr von Überschneidungen und Wiederholungen weitgehend zu vermeiden, obwohl zum Beispiel die "Typologie" im kürzeren, letzten Abschnitt im wesentlichen schon in der Behandlung der "Phänomene" im zweiten Abschnitt enthalten ist. Aber mit der Rückkehr zum Miko-Komplex und der Behandlung der wichtigen Frage: ist die Miko eine „Schamanin“?, vollzieht Frau Okano am Ende dieses Abschnittes (S. 198-205) eine interessante Wendung.

Das vorzüglich dokumentierte Buch schliesst mit einer Zusammenfassung auf Englisch, einem ausführlichen, 14 Seiten umfassenden Literaturverzeichnis (bei dem der Shintō-interessierte Japanologe nur ungern auf die Schreibweise der japanischen Literaturangaben verzichtet) und einem — leider — sehr unvollständigen, aber diesmal von Schriftzeichen versehenen Namen- und Sachglossar.

Kommen wir aber zum Inhalt und fangen wir an beim Titel des Buches: "Die Stellung der Frau im Shintō". Was versteht die Verfasserin unter "Shintō" und was meint sie mit der "Stellung der Frau"? Gleich am Anfang der Einführung heisst es: "Die Volksreligion der Japaner, die bekanntlich... *Shintō* genannt wurde, ist ein Sammelbegriff" für 1. Ur-Shintō als Primärform, 2. den organisierten Schrein-Shintō als Orthodoxie (einschliesslich des Shintō des Kaiserhauses, mit dem der Schrein-Shintō 1900-1945 zum Staatsshintō verschmolzen war), 3. den Volksshintō, und 4. den Sekten-Shintō. Auch wenn man sich mit einer solchen Einteilung im grossen und ganzen zufrieden geben kann, bleibt die Charakterisierung dieses Shintō-Komplexes als "Volksreligion der Japaner" sehr problematisch. Wir möchten, mit Spezialisten wie der zu früh verstorbene Hori Ichirō oder Takeda Chōshū, den Begriff der Volksreligion als "die eigentliche Religion des japanischen Volkes" (Hori) nicht mit Formen des institutionalisierten Shintō verknüpfen. Es ist bezeichnend, dass die Verfasserin in ihrer Darstellung zwar nicht auf den Ur- oder Proto-Shintō als Grundlage — auch als jener der Volksreligion im Sinne Horis — verzichtet, aber den "populären Shintō" als synkretistischen Komplex "von magischen Anschauungen und Praktiken" (und es kommt uns vor, dass eine leider noch sehr häufige, negative, ja verfehlte Werteinschätzung dieses Komplexes hier nicht zu überhören ist) von ihren Betrachtungen ausnimmt. Gerade dadurch — und durch das Ausklammern des Sekten-Shintō — hat Frau Okano sich den Zugang zur Auseinandersetzung

mit lebendigen Glaubensinhalten und empirischem Material im Sinne der Herausgeber dieser Serie (siehe oben) verbaut.

Was nun "die Stellung der Frau" (im Shintō) anbelangt, so lassen die obigen Bemerkungen schon ahnen, dass auch in dieser Beziehung eine Auseinandersetzung mit der lebendigen religiösen Wirklichkeit, welche ja nicht, oder doch nur in sehr beschränktem Masse, jene des "offiziellen" Shintō ist, kaum stattfinden kann. Selbst dort, wo dies möglich und religionssoziologisch relevant gewesen wäre, wie z.B. bei der *heutigen* Schrein-Miko, bleibt die Beschreibung vorwiegend historisierend und kaum realitätsbezogen. Man muss deshalb verdeutlichen, dass es der Verfasserin auch gar nicht darum gehen konnte, die Stellung der Frau, das heisst die Art und Weise der Einbeziehung der gewöhnlichen japanischen Frau in den shintō-religiösen Alltag zu beleuchten. Im dem Fall hätte das Problem schon damit angefangen, dass ein "shintō-religiöser Alltag" wenn überhaupt, dann doch sehr schwierig zu erfassen ist. Es handelt sich in diesem Buch denn auch an erster Stelle um *die Rolle, die sakrale Funktion innerhalb des Shintō-Kultes von sehr bestimmten Frauen*. Wenn wir die als weiblich zu deutenden Gottheiten oder zu Gottheiten erhobenen Frauen ausnehmen, sind dies die charismatischen Herrscherinnen und Kaiserinnen der Frühzeit, die Priesterinnen und sonstigen Kulddienerinnen im Shintō des Kaiserhauses und im Schrein-Shintō. Frau Okano legt dar, wie die im Proto-Shintō wurzelnde Funktion dieser Frauengestalten mit der zunehmenden Organisierung und Institutionalisierung des Shintō und im Zuge von sozial-politischen Umgestaltungen allmählich an Bedeutung abnimmt und verhältnismässig früh (die historische Beschreibung der Frau im mittelalterlichen und neuzeitlichen Shintō umfasst nur etwas mehr als eine Seite; diejenige über den Shintō in und nach der Zeit der Meiji-Restauration sechseinhalb Seiten des ganzen Buches!) zu einer relativen Bedeutungslosigkeit absinkt.

Zu den interessantesten Stellen des Buches dürften jene gehören, wo die Verfasserin sich über die Frau als Charisma-Trägerin, als "Gotteskind" (Miko) oder "göttliche Braut", über ihre priesterliche Funktion und in dieser Beziehung auch über die Frage nach der Priorität der Priesterin vor dem Priester und nach einer möglichen matrilinearen Erbfolge der Priesterfunktion im proto- und frühhistorischen Japan (S. 16-35) äussert. Zu den beiden Fragen hat Frau Okano in differenziert wertender Weise Stellung genommen. Einerseits überprüft sie die Theorie(n) über die Vorherrschaft der Priesterin, welche "im Zusammenhang mit dem als sicher erwiesenen Tatbestand der Frauenregierung und des Matriarchats im alten Japan" (S. 22) steht. Andererseits meint sie aber, dass wir "mit dieser Theorie noch vorsichtig sein" müssen, "weil man praktisch bis jetzt keine letzt-entscheidende Begründung hat" und die angeführten Begründungen "nicht einwandfrei" sind (S. 25). Es scheint ihr, "dass es überhaupt keine einheitliche Antwort auf dieses Problem geben kann" (S. 26), wobei die aus

moderner kulturanthropologischer Sicht ernsthaft in Frage zu stellende oder gar zu verneinende Möglichkeit einer gynäkokratischen Gesellschaft (d.h. eines Matriarchates) als ein allgemeines Gesellschaftssystem angesprochen wird. Die Verfasserin kommt dann zu der durchaus überzeugenden und plausiblen Lösung, welche von ihr als "Mann-und-Frau-System" gedeutet wird (S. 26 ff). Das in diesem System enthaltene Prinzip der in profanen (Mann) und sakralen (Frau) Bereichen geteilten Herrschaft kann für das alte Japan sehr wohl von eminenter Bedeutung gewesen sein, so wie es für das religiöse Leben in der heutigen Okinawa-Präfektur (Ryūkyū-Archipel) auf Grund des sozio-religiösen Prinzips der schwesterlichen "Schutzfunktion" dem Bruder gegenüber noch immer von grösster Wichtigkeit ist. An einigen Stellen (z.B. S. 17, 27) verweist die Verfasserin auch auf dieses Ryūkyū-Beispiel. Befremdend wirkt dann aber ihr augenscheinliches Festhalten an einer *matrilinearen* Vererbung des Priesteramtes. Das auch jetzt noch auf den Ryūkyū-Inselgruppen vollauf funktionierende "ur-shintoistische", sozio-religiöse System, in dem die Miko-Figur der Priesterin eine grosse Rolle spielt und gerade deshalb für Vergleiche mit dem alten Japan herangezogen werden müsste, wurde in den letzten Dezennien wiederholt von japanischen und europäischen Forschern untersucht. Aus diesen Untersuchungen geht deutlich hervor, dass eine Vererbung des Amtes der Priesterin *idealerweise von Tante auf Nichte*, das heisst von *des Mannes* ältester Schwester auf seine älteste Tochter erfolgt. Damit wäre eine *Vererbung in der Patriline* die Regel, auch wenn in der Praxis diese Regel nicht immer eingehalten werden kann.

Wenn wir nun die Studie von Frau Okano abschliessend kurz bewerten, so lässt sich das Folgende sagen:

Die Verfasserin hat ein kulturhistorisch und religionsphänomenologisch recht interessantes Thema in kompetenter Weise behandelt. Die klar aufgebaute und gut geschriebene Arbeit enthält — wohl zum ersten Mal in irgendeiner westlichen Sprache — eine lobenswert vorsichtige und, soweit wir es überprüfen konnten, sehr genaue und erschöpfende Erörterung und Evaluierung des schriftlich festgelegten, oft schwierig zugänglichen Quellenmaterials. In dieser Hinsicht bedeutet die erbrachte Leistung eine wesentliche Bereicherung unserer Kenntnisse. Die an und für sich berechnete und von der Verfasserin beabsichtigte Beschränkung auf eine Wiedergabe und teilweise Interpretation des vorwiegend historisch-beschreibenden Materials lässt uns aber, wie wir oben darzulegen versuchten, den Bezug auf eine in der japanischen Volksreligion noch sehr lebendige Realität des religiösen Empfindens und damit eine zusätzliche Dimension des Miko-Komplexes vermissen.

BURKERT, Walter, *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Die Religionen der Menschheit 15 — Stuttgart, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1977, 512 p., DM 98.—.

Walter Burkert is one of the leading authorities today in the field of Greek religion, and this monumental work is a noble testimony to his remarkably thorough and wide-ranging knowledge of this subject. As a general survey of the literary and archaeological evidence down to the time of Aristotle it will be of immense value to scholars. But it is not simply a collection of material, in the manner of much of Nilsson's great *Geschichte der Griechischen Religion*. One is conscious throughout of a powerful, reflecting mind, seeking to penetrate beneath the surface, and to comprehend the underlying impulses and motives behind these phenomena. At the same time, the author has controlled the natural desire to find a single guiding thread to the apparent labyrinth of Greek polytheism, a temptation which has in the past tended to bedevil attempts to understand this subject. Burkert's own previous book, *Homo Necans* (1972), was to some extent an example of this tendency. In his new book he has adopted a more objective standpoint, although nevertheless keeping certain leading themes in view, and maintaining what one could still call a broadly anthropological approach. In particular, his familiarity with Near Eastern material often enables him to set his subject in the wider context of the religions of the Near East in general, rather than treating it in isolation.

The first section is devoted to a survey of the evidence for the development of religion in Greece from the Neolithic period to the end of the Dark Ages. Linguistic criteria are used to identify elements common to other Indo-European cultures, and a balanced and up-to-date review is given of the Minoan and Mycenaean evidence, as far as this can be assessed. In his discussion of the question of continuity in the Dark Ages Burkert stresses the break in the archaeological evidence for most mainland sites, without losing sight of the links which bind later Greek religion with that of the Mycenaean period. The next section gives a clear and succinct account of the main forms of ritual (sacrifice, prayer, purification, festivals etc.), their contexts (sanctuary, temple, altar, etc.), and the people concerned (priesthood, prophecy etc.). There follows a section on the gods, beginning with general observations on the part played by early poetry and art in moulding men's ideas; going on to a discussion of individual deities, their origins (where these can be ascertained), nature and functions, and closing with some interesting remarks on "the individual character of Greek anthropomorphism". A section on the dead, heroes and chthonic deities naturally follows, in which borderline figures such as Heracles, the Dioscuri and Asclepius are also considered.

The archaic and classical periods were the time of the *polis* community *par excellence*, and Burkert next discusses various aspects of

Greek religion as the religion of the community. Here he stresses, against the modern structuralists, the "open-ended" character of classical polytheism: it cannot be reduced to a single closed system, although it remains true that different deities and cults answer different social needs, and also (in contrast to most Oriental religions) that the Olympian family remained of a limited size. This leads on to a discussion of various forms of association and contrast between deities (e.g. pairs, old and young) and a special chapter on Dionysus in relation to other gods. Then the calendars of festivals are considered, and some instances of festival cycles, a subject more extensively treated in *Homo Necans*. Next come various social aspects: the fundamental problem of amoral gods who are also guardians of justice; oaths and other sanctions; family rituals, and larger state organisations; initiation and other rituals designed to cope with crisis-points in personal and public life. This section concludes with valuable comments on certain leading religious terms in the field of the sacred, the holy and the divine.

Burkert has now progressed from a consideration of externals (ritual, etc.) through the objects and aims of worship (the gods in relation to organised human society), to internal aspects. One now realises that this is also to some extent a historical progression, from his survey of the prehistoric period through that of the classical *polis*, leading on to the development of philosophy, which produced a revolution in the concept of divinity and man's relations with god. All the aspects which seemed to be lacking in earlier Greek religion (belief, dogma, internal moral purity, love for god and a striving towards likeness with god) gradually begin to emerge in philosophy and literature from the late archaic period onwards, finding their culmination in Plato. Here one can indeed speak of a "revolution in religious language and attitudes" (p. 412).

Before considering philosophy, however, Burkert devotes a section to what can be seen as a transitional theme, that of the mystery cults. This includes discussion of local mysteries, the major cults of Samothrace and Eleusis, mysteries of Dionysus, the difficult problems relating to Orpheus and Pythagoras, and the various forms of ascetic life connected with these cults. Burkert stresses how these developments could come into conflict with the normal religion of the community, and how they foreshadow developments in the religions of later antiquity.

Finally, in some forty pages, which are again a masterpiece of clarity and succinctness, Burkert describes the impact on religion of Greek philosophy, down to the time of Aristotle. He shows how it could come about, in spite of the onslaught of the philosophers, that the traditional fabric of cults and gods could survive and continue to exist until the end of the pagan world. From the theories and criticisms of the pre-Socratic philosophers we progress to the rescue of religion through the metaphysics and cosmology of Plato and his followers, anticipated

already in the activities of the early allegorists. The Socratic and Platonic emphasis on the individual soul and its relationship with the divine is complemented by a view of the world as a whole in which the gods still have a part to play: the world-soul of the *Timaeus* manifests its harmony in the movement of the stars, which are themselves divine beings. These visible gods could later by means of allegory be identified with the gods of mythology, and so keep their place in the order of things.

The problem which this solution left unresolved was that of the gods' attitude to men. In Plato's *Laws* they do care for mankind, but Aristotle is less dogmatic. Such a high philosophical attitude left a vacuum for the ordinary man, who turned to less exalted forms of belief, such as magic, for consolation, or fell back on the ancient comfort of traditional rituals and ceremonies duly performed.

Burkert's book thus has a structure and direction which carries one forward, in spite of the inevitable compression and complexity of the material. Those who wish for guidance on particular topics will find the notes invaluable. They are compact and accessible at the foot of each page, and the system of cross-referencing is clear and easy to use. I have also found the Indices a valuable aid.

I come now to queries and disagreements, of which I have only noted a few in the course of reading through the work. Burkert accepts the hypothesis that the volcanic eruption of Thera caused the destruction of some of the Cretan palaces (p. 49). This theory was always questionable, and at the latest Thera conference in 1978 it seems to have been abandoned by archaeologists and vulcanologists alike. Burkert would like to believe that the deity worshipped at Ayia Irini in Ceos in the Mycenaean period was Dionysus, and that there was continuity of cult throughout the Dark Ages (pp. 65, 86, 364). But his various references here are confusing. The head which was re-used as an object of cult at the end of the Geometric period was that of one of the female statues of the fifteenth century B.C., and its torso was found a metre lower down. In the Archaic period the cult is shown by dedications to have been that of Dionysus. But there appears to be a break in the cult after the end of the Mycenaean period (cf. Coldstream, *Geometric Greece* 209 f.), and it is usually assumed that this is a case where the cult of a female deity in the Bronze Age has been replaced by one of a male god in the historic period. It is theoretically possible that it was a male god who was worshipped also in the Bronze Age, that all the statues are of worshippers, and that a tradition of this cult survived, wrongly attached to the female head. But there are hardly sufficient grounds for assuming this. The literary traditions discussed by Eisner (*GRBS* 1972, 123 ff.) suggest the survival of some memories of the Minoan period, but the links with Dionysus are tenuous. It should be said, however, that Burkert himself is aware that the connection is speculative (p. 364).

In *Grazer Beiträge* 1975, 51 ff., Burkert discussed the possible con-

nections between Apollo and the Near Eastern god Rešep, with whom he was identified in Cyprus. He then went on to suggest an association between Apollo-Rešep and the development of temple, cult-statue and free-standing altar in Greece, and to argue that the practice by the Greeks of burning animal bones as a sacrifice was introduced from the Near East *via* Cyprus after the end of the Bronze Age. In his new book Burkert refers to these theories, and states that a Greek tradition actually tells of the "invention" of animal sacrifice in Cyprus (Asclepiades *FGH* 752F1; Burkert p. 95). This passage, however, is ambiguous. According to Porphyry, Asclepiades described how animal sacrifice came to be practised in Cyprus: but there is no suggestion here that the Greeks learnt of it from Cyprus. Burkert seems inclined to accept the view of Yavis, in his book *Greek Altars* (1949), that burnt animal sacrifice was not practised in Bronze Age Greece. At the same time he is aware that some of the archaeological evidence is clearly against Yavis (pp. 39 f., 66, 72, 95). But Burkert also follows Meuli's analysis of the origins and meaning of the classical Greek sacrifice, whereby it derives from a primitive hunting period, in which the hunter goes through an elaborate ritual designed to restore the dead animal to life and to relieve his own feelings of guilt at its killing (pp. 104 f., cf. *Homo Necans*). Consequently this form of sacrifice must be "both very ancient and also post-Mycenean" (p. 97). Burkert's theory of Near Eastern influence has surely led him here into an awkward situation. As Rose pointed out in his review of Yavis' book (*JHS* 1950, 91 f.) the Homeric account of sacrificial ritual suggests that this was something very old within Greek tradition. The archaeological evidence for Bronze Age Greece is complicated by possible differences between Minoan and Mycenaean practice, but it seems to me very likely that the Mycenaeans at least practised much the same ritual as their descendants in Homer's own time. The question of the emergence of the classical complex of altar, temple and cult-statue is rather a matter of the introduction of the monumental building to house the god's image, in association with the altar which had always been the fundamental feature of a cult. Here, of course, one may well look for Near Eastern influence on the development of temples and cult-statues, rather than on that of altars and sacrifice.

Generally speaking Burkert's emphasis on the ritual of animal sacrifice as the central act of Greek religion is surely basically correct, whatever psychological or social explanations one may offer for it. There are, however, some places where it seems to me that he may have been led to give more prominence to this element than the evidence for the classical period suggests, for example in the Anthesteria (p. 361), or in the mystery cults of Eleusis and elsewhere (pp. 415, 430).

In his discussion of the name "Apollo" Burkert refers (p. 227) to the ingenious article (*Rhein. Museum* 1975, 1 ff.) in which he argued for a connection with the Dorian word *apellai*. I find it impossible, how-

ever, to believe that the name has a purely Doric origin, and only spread to the rest of Greece in the Dark Ages, as he seems to suggest. Moreover, there is the problem of the form "Apeilon" in Cypriote and Pamphylian, which he ascribes to Dorian settlers. Kiechle, to whom Burkert referred (*Lakonien und Sparta* 68 ff.), argued that it was pre-Dorian settlers from Laconia who brought the name to Cyprus. This is surely far more likely to be correct.

The Attic-Ionic month names are another element where Burkert's view produces what seems an awkward situation chronologically. He is surely right to argue that they antedate the Ionian migration, but because they differ from the names in Linear B he believes them to be post-Mycenean (p. 346). This does not leave much time for their development! I do not see why they should not be earlier, and at the same time different from those of Cnossos and Pylos.

In discussing the Attic festival of Artemis called the Brauronia, Burkert accepts the commonly stated assumption that the girls who served as attendants of the goddess, and were known as "bears", lived at Brauron for a long period, perhaps as much as four years (p. 395). But when the chorus in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (645) say "I was a bear at the Brauronia", this suggests that they performed the office at the festival. This is also what is implied by the Scholia on this passage. There is no certain evidence that they went through a lengthy period of "ritual seclusion" in the sanctuary, although of course they may have stayed for a time, over the period of the festival. An inscription from Brauron mentions "the Amphipoleion in which . . . live", but there is a lacuna at the vital point (cf. the only published photograph, in the article by J. Papadimitriou, *Scientific American*, June 1963, 118 f.). The "Parthenon", also mentioned in inscriptions, was a building in which offerings were kept (cf. T. Linders, *Studies in the Treasure Records of Artemis Brauronia* 71 f.), perhaps the shrine now called the "tomb of Iphigeneia", where offerings and inventories of offerings were found. The rooms in the Stoa were almost certainly dining-rooms not living quarters (Linders l.c.; J. J. Coulton, *The Architectural Development of the Greek Stoa* 9, 43). Further vases connected with the ritual have now been published by Lily Kahil in *Antike Kunst* 20 (1977), 86 ff. One actually shows a woman with a bear's-head mask and a long robe (perhaps the *krokotos*), together with another figure with a bear's head, in the presence of Leto, Apollo and Artemis.

In his account of the Eleusinian Mysteries Burkert states that *myesis* (initiation) took place individually, and that it could be performed in the Eleusinion at Athens as well as at Eleusis (p. 427). Both of these statements may be correct, but the epigraphic evidence is again too fragmentary for any certain conclusion (cf. my edition of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, pp. 20 f.).

Finally I have one or two general observations about Burkert's approach. A historian might complain that more attention should have

been paid in the section on the *polis* to the ways in which religion was used and adapted in the classical period for political ends (cf. for example Nilsson's *Cults, Myths, Oracles and Politics*). A literary scholar, on the other hand, might well object that much of the real life and colour of Greek religion is lacking in so general an analysis. A few quotations from Aristophanes, for example, can sometimes tell one more about what religion meant to an Athenian of the late fifth century than anything else. In this respect Parke's recent book on Athenian festivals does at least attempt to give a more vivid picture. It is easy to object that Trygaeus' or Dicaeopolis' view of religion is crude, concentrating as it does largely on eating and drinking and concomitant pleasures, but if the communal, sacrificial meal is at the social centre of Greek religion, such a simple view may in fact come nearer the heart of the matter than one might at first suppose. Literary forms, such as those of hymns and prayers, can also tell us much. It is significant that the section on "Tanz und Lied" is only two pages long, and that "hymns" are not mentioned in the Indices! Burkert is usually scrupulous in referring to the literary evidence, but one would have liked it to have been allowed to speak for itself more often. Nevertheless, it would be foolish to complain, where there is so much to praise. This is a work which very few scholars nowadays could hope to rival, and in its range and depth it fully deserves its place in a series devoted to "the religions of mankind."

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ERGARDT, Jan T., *Faith and Knowledge in Early Buddhism*, Studies in the History of Religions (Supplements to *Numen*) XXXVII — Leiden, E. J. Brill. 1977, XII + 182 p.

Since this book adds nothing to our knowledge of Buddhism I might dismiss it summarily; but since it is expensively produced in a prestigious series and might invite emulation I shall examine what seem to me to be its defects. It has a dual focus, a focus at the same time grandiloquently wide and arbitrarily narrow. On the one hand, it hopes to be relevant to "ordinary people" (p. 171), and that by this phrase Dr. Ergardt means not just Buddhists but all of us is clear from the last words of the introductory chapter (p. 10): "The problems of this study will remain; a concrete change of and a new knowledge about reduced *kamma*-function — will they allow a metaphysical solution or would such an interpretation aim at a solution that is outside the problem of human beings, not solving their problem? What function have *faith and knowledge* in these processes?" On the other hand, most of the work is so specialized that it is unlikely to impinge on anyone's

existential anxieties. For Ergardt has chosen as his primary material a minute range of Pali texts. He has restricted himself not merely to the Pali Canon, or to its four main collections of sermons (the four *Nikāya*), restrictions which could be justified by his criterion of "avoiding interpretations from later epoques (*sic*) and heterogeneous sources" (p. 147), but by three further restrictions: to one of these collections, the *Majjhima Nikāya*; to the contexts in which occur four stereotyped passages describing Enlightenment (he calls them *arahant-formulas*); and finally to the sermons containing *one* of those four stereotyped passages. What it boils down to is that he investigates faith and knowledge in early Buddhism by content analysis of 33 of the 152 *sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, 33 texts which happen to share a certain formal feature. All of us who deal with a large corpus of scriptures inevitably — from laziness, ignorance or bias — select our material, but we do not usually pretend to make a virtue of it.

Before considering how well Ergardt carries out his programme, we must take another look at that programme. To answer the questions he asks of his material, what help will he admit? He adduces hardly any evidence from the Canon outside the *Majjhima Nikāya*; and he never uses the commentarial tradition — or so he thinks. What kind of method is this? To me it suggests only the devout Protestant directly confronting — with faith, if not knowledge — the word of God revealed in the Bible. But such independence of judgment is an illusion. Ergardt (rightly) uses the work of modern scholars, in particular the *Majjhima Nikāya* translation by Miss Horner and the P.T.S. Pali-English Dictionary. For instance, he sets out on his analysis (in chapter two) by scrutinizing the meanings of certain Pali verbs in the semantic area of "knowing", and tells us what the P.E.D. has to say about them; but he quotes no Pali commentaries, though their main pursuit was precisely to discuss the meanings of words, and the compilers of modern dictionaries are deeply in their debt. Miss Horner's translation too is often guided by the commentaries, and so — one might almost say "to the extent that they are any good" — are the other modern writers on Buddhism whom Ergardt quotes. So why allow us access to the Buddhist exegetical tradition only at second hand?

In the bulk of the book (pp. 19-146) Ergardt proceeds as follows. He divides his 33 *sutta* into small groups according to the phraseology which immediately accompanies the "*arahant-formula*" in them; devoting a chapter to each group, he analyses the contents of each sermon, first discursively and then in a table, and ends the chapter with a discussion somehow relevant to the theme of faith and knowledge. The first requisite of this approach is to present synopses which are accurate and adequate to the purpose. Unfortunately Ergardt's renditions of the texts are sometimes wrong, sometimes so obscure that one cannot even tell whether they are right or wrong. Space admits of only a few examples.

1) Ergardt wrongly reports sutta 105 (p. 20) as saying that after reaching “right nibbāna” one may still be fettered by desire. This misunderstanding leads to a horrible muddle on pp. 31-2 (further referred to on p. 155) when he interprets *sammā nibbāna* as inferior to *parinibbāna*. The two are the same.

2) In sutta 82 (p. 45) *assako loko* does not mean “The world is not of its own” — whatever that may mean. Miss Horner’s “The world is not one’s own” is intelligible but also incorrect. Both translations would require a *karmadhāraya* compound *assakaṃ*, whereas *assako* must be a *bahuvrīhi* (comm: *assako ti nissako sakabhaṇḍarahito*); so the sentence means, “Living beings have nothing which is their own.” That *loko* here means “living beings” is corroborated by the next phrase Ergardt quotes: *loko . . . taṇhādāso*, “living beings are slaves to desire” (which he translates “this world is stuck in craving”). Thus *assako loko* is just an aspect of the *anattā* doctrine (see below).

3) In sutta 79 (p. 131) occurs the standard formula summing up the Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*). The doctrine is not directly mentioned in the book, and from Ergardt’s translation and interpretation I cannot tell whether he recognizes it. The formula, *imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti*, means “When there is A, B occurs.” Ergardt translates, “In ‘this being’, that is”, and calls it an “*existential interpretation of kamma*” (his italics).

4) I defy anyone to understand the first part of the synopsis of sutta 121. In the paragraph spanning pp. 101-2, the Buddha’s argument is that a monk who contemplates the jungle, keeping inhabited areas from his mind, is aware of the jungle’s emptiness of people and so acquires a correct, realistic awareness of emptiness. (This analogy will lead on to seeing one’s own constituent parts as empty of self.)

Perhaps even more serious than such slips is Ergardt’s blindness to the interesting problems his material occasionally raises. On p. 99 he reports that in sutta 76 Ānanda preaches against doctrine which a teacher has worked out by reasoning. Though Ergardt again mis-translates part of the crucial phrase (*sayampañibhānaṃ* means “his own inspiration”, not “based on confidence in himself”), this should not have obscured the central relevance of this paragraph to the book’s main theme. But Ergardt’s approach is so blinkered that he omits it from his tabular synopsis and never even mentions it again!

What, then, of the book’s conclusions? Knowledge that Enlightenment has been reached “is a question of cognition in terms of knowledge/comprehension and experience” (p. 17). (The words “gnosis” and “realization” might have helped out here.) “One gains faith in the sense of confidence in the Buddha through life according to the dhamma” (p. 23). These remarks, while true, seem to me almost as banal as the italicized discovery that “*vimutti is equivalent to nibbāna*” (p. 87). On the other hand, “Faith is not a necessary condition for the religious process but knowledge and experience are” (p. 145); while

"faith (*saddhā*) is not excluded from the frame of knowledge"; "its importance is affective and conative" (pp. 170-1). There is some confusion *en route*: having called his "arahant-formulas" a "credo" (p. 4), Ergardt says, "we cannot see the function of faith as the main part of the 'credo'" (p. 5).

But logical clarity is not Ergardt's forte. When he thus characterizes "the principle of the method for this study: placing emphasis on the real process for the interpretation of the individual parts" (p. 162), it is unclear whether he is commending *a priori* reasoning or circularity. "If we want to understand Buddhism we must evince our tendency to metaphysics" (pp. 168-9) may be just bad English; but that cannot be the explanation for the following: "We assume like J. M. Kitagawa 'that all religions rest on three cornerstones, namely, authority, tradition and experience'. If it is so, we must state that one cornerstone is more important than the other two and we must choose the fact of experience" (p. 146). Not only Buddhism totters.

However, the book's worst defect, to my mind, is that after all his work on texts devoted to it Ergardt still has not grasped the most fundamental doctrine of Buddhism: that Enlightenment consists in realizing that there is no soul or enduring essence in living beings. He begins, promisingly: "My hypothesis is that the unique function of the Buddhist message can be shown to be built on the *hypothesis of anattā*" (p. 5), and embarks on his conclusion with the words, "There is a proactive function depending on *the necessity of correspondence between the anattā-view and the religious goal in teaching*" (p. 151), which I cannot quite understand but seem to point in the right direction. But alas, he does not understand what *anattā* means. He rightly combats Bhattacharya's eternalist (*śaśatavādin*) views, though I do not see how he reconciles this criticism with his own remarks that "behind the development there is the activity of a subject" (p. 43 fn. 44), and that "The Way starts with the view of *self as impermanent and not-self*" (p. 112 — his italics), a contradiction in terms. On p. 156 he is still asking, "But who has this knowledge, who will have this experience?", and he decides to leave this "very difficult philosophical problem" unsolved. Yet on the very next page he plumps for annihilationism (*ucchedavāda*): "It is clear that the formula describes the extinction of the life-processes of the arahant. No other interpretation is possible. '(People) disappear for ever in Nirvāṇa by being extinct.'" (The last sentence is a quotation from Stcherbatsky; the whole passage gives the impression that the only good arahant is a dead one.) Then "it seems as if the monks strive towards extinction . . . *nibbāna* as being in the formula and the formula as being *nibbāna* show us the extinction of the 'I'." The Buddha repeatedly preached that there never was an "I" there at all, so it could not be extinguished; but so far as Dr. Ergardt is concerned he preached in vain.

Megillath ha-Miqdash (The Temple Scroll), Hebrew ed. Edited by Yigael Yadin, Jerusalem, The Israel Exploration Society, The Department of Archeology of the Hebrew University, and Hekhal ha-Sefer, 1977. Vol. i: Introduction, 308 p.; vol. ii: Text and Commentary, 323 p.; vol. iii: Plates and Text (82 Plates); iiib: Supplementary Plates. *

The Temple Scroll is the largest and longest of the famous "Dead Sea Scrolls" from Qumran. It is not completely preserved and it is especially regrettable that the beginning of the Scroll is missing. The labour of arranging the pieces of the Scroll and of deciphering it was very difficult, and reading and commenting on the Scroll was no less so. It is impossible to overestimate the value and quality of Yadin's achievement, and his ability to make the fruits of his research available deserves the highest praise. The edition of the Scroll, as regards both form and content, is a monument to the high standard of scholarship as well as of book-production in Israel and especially to Yadin's ingenuity. The Scroll itself is an outstanding contribution to the history of Judaism in the second Commonwealth and an important document illuminating the religious and social thinking and life of the famous "Dead Sea Sect", rightly identified by most scholars with the Essenes. The new Scroll brings new evidence which supports this generally accepted identification.

The Temple Scroll does not contain theological passages or religious poetry. Its author does not speak about the historical situation in which the Scroll was written. We can only indirectly surmise that the time was the later Maccabaeon period. But even so, it is clear that the Scroll was not written in the broader movements, in which the sect originated, but that it was composed by a member of the sect itself. This can be recognized by comparison of the Scroll with other sectarian documents. The Scroll contains prescriptions concerning mainly the Temple and its ritual, but also other prescriptions are included. The document is a kind of *Torah* and the greatest part of its content are quotations from the Pentateuch — and sometimes also from other biblical books. The biblical verses are rewritten, rearranged, harmonized and often adapted to the special sectarian understanding of the meaning of biblical precepts. Yadin rightly recognized that very often we can find in the Scroll hidden polemics against the oral law of the Pharisees. There are also in the Scroll very important new passages, especially those concerning the special liturgical calendar of the Sect. The Calendar of the Scroll is the same utopistic solar calendar, which we know already from the other Scrolls and from the apocryphal Book of Jubilees. Yadin has shown that the sectarian liturgical year was not completely forgotten even in later periods. To this end he adduces a very interesting testimony from Saadia Gaon (10th century C.E.) and a quotation from a

Karaite author of the Middle Ages. The sect celebrated four festivals with intervals of 50 days between them: the festival of new barley, of new wheat, of new wine and of new oil. There is an interesting note in the medieval *Liber pontificalis*¹ concerning Pope Callistus (217-222 C.E.): "He fixed that there shall be a fasting on the Sabbath four times in the year, that of grain, of wine and oil, according to a prophecy". The note speaks about four fastings, but enumerates only three. If we suppose that in the mention of grain two fasting days are wrongly named, namely that of barley and that of wheat, the four fastings of Callistus correspond, even in their order, to the four festivals of the Essenes. Did then some of the Roman Jews observe, in some form, the ancient Essene festivals? In any case, it is known that Callistus quarreled with Roman Jews. Thus, the possibility cannot be excluded that a prophecy proclaiming four fastings on the sabbath as a contrast against four festivals of the Jews could serve very well the purpose of the Pope.

The Scroll is based upon the Pentateuch, but not only this: it is written as if the Lord had spoken Himself. This is not the only case in Jewish pseudepigraphic literature of the second Commonwealth, as can be seen also from the Book of Jubilees. The direct speech of God invested our book with the highest possible degree of authority in the eyes of the Sect, and no wonder that it was often transcribed, a difficult enterprise because of the exceeding length of the Scroll. Yadin proposes some identifications with books, mentioned both in the writings of the Sect and in the Bible. All identifications with texts mentioned in the sectarian literature as well as pseudepigraphical identifications with non-existing books named in the Bible are possible. Yadin also wrestles with the problem, how a human author could dare to write in the name of his God. One point is of special interest: not only does God speak, so to say, directly through the whole Scroll, but He even does not, as is usually the case in the Pentateuch, address His words to Moses. Moses himself is never named in the Scroll and Aaron, his brother, appears only in the phrase "sons of Aaron" i.e. the priests. Thus, there is a similarity between our Scroll and the Book of Deuteronomy, where the main laws are described as God's direct utterances (although addressed to Moses), and Aaron is mentioned in Deuteronomy only in historical connections. Unfortunately, we cannot know, what was the literary frame of the Scroll, because the historical — or pseudohistorical — circumstances, in which the revelation took place, were surely indicated in the first lines of the Scroll, which are lost.

There is a hint in the Scroll itself (page 45, line 5, see Yadin II, page 131), as to what was the fictitious frame of the supposed revelation: there we read about "the sons of Aaron your brother". Thus, it appears that the Scroll was understood by its author to be God's revelation to Moses and, hence, it was impossible to the author, when

he wrote down this revelation, to report what God had said to Moses, because obviously, God could not speak about Himself in the third person.

We cannot analyse here the Temple as described in the present Scroll. Yadin has rightly seen that it is not the eschatological Temple as seen by the prophet Ezechiel and described in Aramaic fragments of another Dead Sea Scroll. The Temple of our Scroll was the Temple of its time as it should be, but even so, this Temple belonged somehow to the realm of Utopia. The author speaks, *inter alia*, of the twelve tribes, the oracle of Urim and Tumim, and the two Cherubs in the sanctuary. It is very improbable that the author of the Scroll thought that the Temple of his days was unacceptable, because these things no longer existed. On the other hand, the Temple of the Scroll does not fit the Temple of Solomon either. Thus, the situation is complex, but one thing is clear: the author describes a non-eschatological ideal Temple.

The Scroll nevertheless contains a hint of the eschatological Temple. The ideal Temple of the Scroll shall exist until the day of bliss, "when I will create My Sanctuary, in order to prepare it for all the days, according to the covenant, which I made with Jacob in Bethel". Bethel means in Hebrew "the House of God" and, according to a rabbinic opinion, God had shown in Bethel to Jacob the Temple of the last days. The Scroll was written before the destruction of the Second Temple and our passage confirms the fact that the hope for a new Temple in the last days preceded the destruction of the actual Temple. This is not without importance for the history of the Christian concept of the New Jerusalem.

This is not the only contribution of the new Scroll to our understanding of the origins and development of Christianity. Yadin tries e.g. to show that the Essenes are mentioned in the Gospels under the name of Herodians. From the Scroll it becomes also absolutely certain that the Essenes opposed polygamy and divorce, a position which was inherited by the Church.

In connection to capital punishment, the Scroll is far more rigid than everything we knew from sectarian literature until now. This standpoint is clearly an expression of a hyperfundamentalistic opposition to a contrary position of the Pharisees and rabbinic Judaism;² Pharisaic and rabbinic Judaism succeeded in restricting capital punishment and eliminating the atrocities of execution, in order to prevent both mutilation of the body and the cruel suffering of the executed. This was part of the humanization of Judaism by the Pharisees. The opposition to this Pharisaic tendency came from both conservative Sadducees and the fundamentalistic sectarian preachers of theological sacred hatred (Qumran Sect). It is not difficult to decide, whether the preacher of

all-embracing love was nearer to the Essenes or to the more humanistic rabbinism.

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* Editors' Note: It had been the intention of NUMEN to review *The Temple Scroll* after the publication of the English version which was to follow immediately on the publication of the Hebrew original. However, on the eve of the publication of the original, Prof. Yadin was appointed Deputy Prime Minister of Israel. His new duties and responsibilities prevented him from supervising the production of the English edition which now appears to be postponed *sine die*. In the circumstances the Editors have decided to publish Prof. D. Flusser's review of the Hebrew edition.

¹ Ed. L. Duchesne, I, 1955², 17, 2; R. Rordorf, *Sabbat and Sonntag*, Zürich, 1972, p. 35: "Hic (sc. Callistus) constituit ieiunium die sabbati quater (ter *var*) in anno fieri, frumenti, vini et olei, secundum prophetiam."

² About this question see especially A. Büchler, "Die Todesstrafen der Bibel und in der jüdisch-nachbiblischen Zeit", *MGWJ*, vol. 50, 1906, pp. 539-562, 664-706.

The New Religious Consciousness, Edited by Charles Y. Glock and Robert N. Bella. — London, University of California Press, 1977, xvii + 391 p. £ 11.75.

"Was the youth counterculture mainly epiphenomenal — a mere ripple in the stream of history — of momentary but of no permanent significance? Or was it a sign of more profound changes whose course, although more quietly now, continues apace?"

It was with these questions in mind that, in the Spring of 1971, the members of a Berkeley graduate discussion group led by Professors Glock and Bellah decided to carry out a research project which would provide some of the background information necessary for them to proceed beyond mere speculation in their inquiries into "the new religious consciousness". The study concentrated on the San Francisco Bay Area not only because that was where the researchers were and nowhere provides a more lush hunting ground for the modern varieties of religious experience, but also because the place in which to read the future is the place in which it all begins — and that, it was reasoned, is the Bay Area.

The book begins with nine ethnographic studies. First there are three new religious movements in the Asian tradition: the Healthy-Happy-Holy Organisation (which celebrates the start of the Aquarian age with tantric yoga), the Hare Krishna movement (which celebrates the end of the materialistic age of Kali-Yuga with shorn heads, saffron robes and chanting) and the Divine Light Mission (which celebrates the experience of "knowledge" revealed through a teenage guru).

There follow accounts of three new quasi-religious movements: the Berkeley New Left (which started it all by attacking local (university) and national (social and military) policies), the Human Potential movement (which spiritually, physically, morally, politically, meaningfully, primordially or in any way you like develops the "real you") and Synanon (which forces you to be extremely rude in its "games" in order to become extremely polite in its community). Finally come three new religious movements in the Western tradition: the Christian World Liberation Front (which celebrates Jesus on the radical campus), the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (which celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit in tongues) and the Church of Satan (which celebrates the Devil with untrammelled hedonism).

The New Religious Consciousness is not, however, just concerned with the movements in isolation from the wider context. It takes a look at the reactions from the established religions to the upheavals in their midst by studying the Church Student Missions and the varied responses of some local congregations. There is an analysis of data on students from Jewish backgrounds which suggests that it is not contact with countercultural influences at college, but earlier experience in the family, that is responsible for any undermining of feelings of Jewish identity. There is also a study of a sample of all those living in the Bay Area which indicates that those who are attracted to the new movements (especially the Human Potential ones) tend to be more highly educated and from better off homes than the general population. Whatever else it may be, the new religious consciousness does not express the voice of the materially dispossessed.

An historical dimension is added with an examination by Linda Pritchard of the Second Great Awakening. This describes how, between 1820 and 1860, the established religion of North America underwent a crisis from which there emerged a plethora of new theologies and religious practices — frequently in the guise of evangelical revivalism. Cultic, non-Christian and secular sects vied with each other for the lost souls of the nineteenth century and for a time it looked as though an uncontrollable religious anarchy had broken loose. Eventually however a new *modus vivendi* was established and churches once again settled down — to await, no doubt, the coming of the Third Great Awakening a hundred years later.

So what is one to conclude? The book ends with assessments of the import of the new religious consciousness from each of the editors. Professor Bellah diagnoses the signs as the outcome of a massive erosion of the legitimacy of American institutions. Until recent times it was Biblical religion and utilitarian individualism which, together, provided meaning and provoked loyalty for the American way of life. Biblical religion offered the motivation of conscience, utilitarian individualism the motivation of interest. Slowly however the latter eroded the former, but utilitarian individualism could not by itself provide any

meaningful pattern to social or personal existence. This situation became increasingly apparent through the challenge of the civil rights movement and the militant activism of the Vietnam War. The crisis of the 'sixties' was above all a religious crisis of meaning. The new religious consciousness provided a stable social setting and a coherent set of symbols for young people disorientated by the drug culture or disillusioned by radical politics.

In trying to assess possible futures for America in the light of his and his colleagues' study, Professor Bellah contemplates three possible scenarios. First there is the possibility that everything will continue as before, only more so. There would be a growing idolization of scientism which while it might provide a surrogate religion for the elite, would hardly do so for the masses. They would be brought to heel through a combination of coercion and material reward in the furtherance of a Brave New World. The second scenario takes the shape of traditional authoritarianism. A single ideology is selected and forced on all as The Truth. In the third scenario science would serve men rather than being their master. People would be concerned about ends rather than means. They would have a firm commitment to the quest for ultimate reality but this would be within a context of free inquiry and free speech. Professor Bellah admits that all this might be utopian but, he concludes, perhaps it is "only the implementation of a utopian vision, a holistic reason that unites subjectivity and objectivity (that) will make human life in the twenty-first century worth living".

For Professor Glock the crisis in consciousness was the result of the undermining by social science of the belief that either the individual or God was in control. Unless science can identify a purpose to which individuals can commit themselves and around which a new social order can be built, the disenchantment of the world will grow ever more acute with ever more desperate attempts being made to fill the world with some sort of meaning and purposefulness that is not eroded by the scientific enterprise. The New Religious Consciousness is not a thing of the past but a testimony to the continuing search for alternative realities.

This is a difficult book to assess in a few sentences for it covers a wide variety of approaches and opinions. But while there is no uniformity of approach there is a certain coherence which enables one to start at page one and read right through the book with some sense of continuity as the plot, or rather plots, unfold. All the contributions are refreshingly free from sociological jargon, and there is only an occasional hint of "psychobabble". The studies tend to be sympathetic towards the movements; indeed the paper on the Divine Light Mission is actually written by a devotee of Guru Maharaj Ji. While it might be argued that this is a source of weakness from the standpoint of "disinterested sociological analysis", it can also be argued that it is a strength from the standpoint of subjective understanding. The ap-

parently bizarre may not become entirely acceptable, but the attraction for its followers does become more comprehensible.

From the vantage point of the late 'seventies', it is what a book written in the mid 'seventies' leaves out that surprises more than what is put in. Perhaps one of the most glaring omissions is that although reactions to the new movements are discussed, nowhere can one find any mention of "deprogramming" in spite of the fact that the practice had got well under way by the time the book was being written. But it would be unfair to expect everything from one book and perhaps the fact that *The New Religious Consciousness* does in itself offer a certain raising of the consciousness of the consciousness is as much as anyone can hope for in this day and age. It is more a statement of praise than of criticism to say that the book, like the times, raises more questions than it can answer.

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MYŚLIWIEC, Karol, *Studien zum Gott Atum*, Band I, Die heiligen Tiere des Atum, Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge Herausgegeben von Arne Eggebrecht 5 - Hildesheim, Gerstenberg Verlag/Pelizaesus - Museum, 1978, 251 p. DM 48.—.

Die ikonographischen, besonders die typologischen und stilkritischen Beobachtungen, von Dr. Myśliwiec im Katalog und in den Bildern angetragen, bilden das schöne und wichtige Ergebnis dieses Buches. Man findet dort viele unbekannte oder unveröffentlichte Sachen.

Leider heben die Kapitel mit Kommentar sich ungünstig davon ab. Material und Bearbeitungen werden mehrmals nicht erwähnt. Verf. ist öfters unkritisch und bleibt bei Belegen stecken ohne eine nähere Erklärung, bzw. Synthese oder Unterscheidung zu versuchen. Aufsätze wie "Kalb" und "Phönix" sind völlig unzureichend.

Ausgezeichnete Indices, Abbildungsverzeichnisse und Tafeln schließen den Band ab.

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WAARDENBURG (University of Utrecht), Jacques, *Reflections on the Study of Religion Including an Essay on the Work of Gerardus van der Leeuw*, Religion and Reason 15, General Editor Jacques Waardenburg — The Hague-Paris-New York, Mouton Publishers, 1978, XI + 284 p.

It is the author's intention to further a new style of phenomenological research. A hermeneutical study of religious facts and meanings, based

on reason and free from philosophical or theological influences.

The setting for this plea is provided by eleven papers some of which are (partially) reprinted here. Ten present personal considerations. They contrast with the final chapter, the essay mentioned in the title.

Papers 1-3 constitute a general introductory part, accounting for the recent past as well. Part II (4-6) underlines the need of methodical self-criticism. The two papers of Part Three offer a critical history of a centennial discipline. Part IV (9-10) gives applications to and in contemporary religions.

Being a pupil of van der Leeuw himself, the present reviewer has to confess that, personally, he thinks Five the most captivating part of the book. Again and again, the reader gets a vivid, be it somewhat one-sided picture of life and times of a great man. He comes across interesting, if not convincing clarifications and explanations, e.g. of the relations between Kristensen (*Indexes*, 257) and van der Leeuw.

We owe to Dr. Waardenburg another volume worth reading and consulting.

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WIENER, Aharon, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism*, A Depth-Psychological Study, The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization — London, Henley and Boston, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978, 248 p. £ 5.00.

According to a talmudic dictum, "He who finds the woman who corresponds to him is kissed by Elijah" (B. Kidd. 70a). One would be inclined to enlarge the range of this maxim and add: The author who has found the subject corresponding to his elective affinity has been kissed by Elijah.

Dr. Wiener has given us a *summa* on the Prophet Elijah; if we are not mistaken there exists no other book which includes such a wealth of material extending from the biblical record to contemporary Judaism, embracing as well a study of the Prophet's image in Christianity and Islam. This, certainly, is no mean achievement and one reads with admiration and awe the bibliography of all the publications which the author has conscientiously consulted. But Dr. Wiener is not merely a compiler, he is also and above all an interpreter giving throughout the book and particularly in the concluding chapter, the meaning of the Elijah figure in the course of Jewish history.

It is indeed puzzling that Elijah has acquired such a central rôle within Judaism. That Moses, the liberator and the lawgiver, should have become an archetypical hero, stands to reason. One can also

understand how David, the ideal king, became the prototype of the Messiah. Elijah, however, as he is portrayed within the Books of the Kings, could well have remained a minor hero, liable to be embellished by legend but not given superhuman proportion. It is probably his ascent into heaven that opened the way to the transfiguration of the Prophet. But the reason why the Jewish psyche had a fixation precisely on this man of God is still an enigma. Elijah is neither a Moses *redivivus* nor the Messiah-to-come. By all rules, he should be an anti-hero; he became, nevertheless, the architypal hero who played a decisive rôle for the spiritual-religious development of the Jewish people as a whole and of the individual Jew.

We found particularly enlightening the two chapters on Elijah's function in the Kabbalah and in Hasidism. This is an area which remains a *terra incognita* to most non-Jewish scholars who assume that *Halakhah* and *Haggadah* constitute ninety-nine percent of Jewish lore. Today, after the monumental work of G. Scholem and his school this illusion has been irretrievably shattered. "Judaism within the limits of reason" corresponds certainly to the post-Kantian *Weltanschauung* of emancipated Jewish philosophers but has no existence in reality. Kabbalah and Hasidism are not fortuitous and external accretions to a fundamentally rational religious system: they are inseparable from Judaism and are no less Jewish than, say, Maimonides.

In the Kabbalah Elijah achieves the perfection of the First Adam and is transformed into the angel *Sandalphon*; he is the very type of the *redeemed redeemer* and the mystagogue of the Kabbalists. In the hasidic mystical experience the sudden illumination, the experience of being united with God, is attributed to the Elijah-potential, dormant within the individual and activated by the Elijah-factor.

Having escaped the constraints of time, Elijah is coextensive with the cosmos, both in its spacial and temporal aspects. He is the mediator *par excellence* between the above and the below, the immanent and the transcendent, the world and the divine. We cannot but be grateful to Dr. Wiener for mediating to us the knowledge and the understanding of the Elijah-figure and its impact on Jewish spiritual stirrings and strivings.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS
East-West Religions in Encounter

Conference and Summer School
University of Hawaii at Manoa
June 16-27, 1980

The religious history of mankind is taking as monumental a turn in our century as is the political or economic, if only we could see it.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith
Harvard University

The strange mix of the dramatic resurgence of traditional religious groups over against the emerging new consciousness of shared religious values is forcing a re-evaluation of our human future. We plan a Conference and Summer School on "East-West Religions in Encounter" to be held in June 1980 with the primary focus being on Buddhism and Christianity in the midst of transition. Our purpose is to bring together scholars and leaders from the academic and religious communities in order to explore how we are changing both as persons and institutions, societies and cultures.

- A. Asian and Western specialists will speak on selected topics such as:
 - 1. Religious communities in a pluralistic world.
 - 2. New Forms of personal and institutional religion.
 - 3. Religious reformations East and West.
 - 4. Rapid social change and traditional religion.
 - 5. Diplomacy, international economics and religious ethics.
- B. Buddhists and Christians will speak about each other's religious traditions on themes such as:
 - 1. Parallels in the development of religious ethics.
 - 2. Cross-cultural adaption of religious paradigms.
 - 3. Search for depth in the confrontation of world views.
 - 4. Methods of religious discipline.
 - 5. The future of religion.
- C. Conferences and Summer School methods will include:
 - 1. A variety of courses on Christian and Buddhist topics at UHM Summer School.
 - 2. Seminars and workshops will be held so that theme address (and papers) can be studied and assessed, specialists can confront each other, and summer school courses can be inter-related.
 - 3. Practicums on the aesthetic and disciplinary elements will be sponsored including art, poetry, ritual, meditation, dance, etc.

D. Co-sponsorship of the Conference will be sought from a number of academic and religious institutions such as Blaisdell Institute, Programm for the Study of New Religions, Graduate Theological Union-Berkeley, World Fellowship of Buddhists, etc.

E. Possible Participants:

1. *Buddhists*

Kiyong Lee, Tongbak University, Seoul
David Kalupahana, University of Hawaii
Masao Ichishima, Taisho University, Tokyo
Masao Abe, Nara University of Education, Japan
Taitetsu Unno, Smith College, Massachusetts
Shojun Bando, Otani University, Kyoto
Sulak Sivaraksa, writer and publisher, Bangkok
Alfred Bloom, University of Hawaii

2. *Christians*

Peter Berger, Boston College
Donald Swearer, Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania
John Cobb, Claremont Graduate School, California
Masatoshi Doi, Doshisha University, Kyoto
Lynn A. de Silva, The Ecumenical Institute, Colombo
George Rupp, Harvard University
Fr. Willis Jager, Kamakura, Japan
Julia Ching, University of Toronto

3. *Others*

Fritz Buri, Basel University
Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, Bonn University
Winston King, Madison, Wisconsin
Joseph Kitagawa, University of Chicago
Whalen Lai, University of California
Rita Gross, University of Wisconsin
J. Bruce Long, The Blaisdell Institute, California

University of Hawaii

D. W. CHAPPELL

Second announcement

EAST-WEST RELIGIONS IN ENCOUNTER
Buddhist-Christian Renewal & the Future of Humanity

June 16-27, 1980

Themes:

1. Sources and Methods of Buddhist-Christian Renewal
 - a. symbols of ultimacy, myth and ritual
 - b. scriptures, teachers, tradition and transmission

- c. religious reformations East and West
 - d. prayer, meditation, mystical experience
- 2. Buddhist-Christian Renewal & the Future of Humanity
 - a. the problem of the human condition
 - b. human rights and responsibilities
 - c. women and religion
 - d. social and cultural transformation

Resource Persons:

Abe Masao (Nara and Princeton), Donald Swearer (Swarthmore) & Taitetsu Unno (Smith College) will be Conference Leaders. Resource persons will include: John Cobb (Claremont); Robert Aitken, Roshi (Maui); Lynn de Silva (Ecumenical Institute, Sri Lanka); Masatoshi Doi (Kyoto); Hans-Joachim Klimkeit (Comparative Religion Institute, Bonn); Joan Chatfield (Institute for Religion & Social Change); David Kalupahana (Hawaii); and (pending) Chao Fu-San (Peking).

Financial Assistance:

Certain matching funds are available for accommodation and honorariums if the airfare of participants is donated to the conference and the airticket purchased through the conference organization. Write for details to the Conference Director, Professor David W. Chappell, Conference Director Dept. of Religion, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A. 96822.

Co-sponsors:

Department of Religion, University of Hawaii
 Department of Philosophy, University of Hawaii
 Hawaii Buddhist Council
 Hawaii Council of Churches
 American Institute of Buddhist Studies, Amherst, Mass.
 Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley
 Taishō University, International Buddhist Studies Institute, Tokyo
 School of Theology at Claremont
 Blaisdell Institute for Advanced Study in World Cultures and Religion

22-25 May, 1980

The Ninth Annual Meeting of the International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations (U.S.) will be held at Syracuse University on May 22-25, 1980. Papers have been invited particularly, but not exclusively, on the themes of:

Spengler's Relevance to Current Civilizational Thought
The Celts in Comparative Civilizational Perspective
Archaeology of Knowledge and Non-Western Traditions
Cultures and Climates of Liberality and Intolerance
Emerging Issues in the Analysis of Contemporary Civilizations
Histories and Mythologies of Childhood in Comparative Perspective
Civilizational Responses to Urban Problems
Changes and Conflicts in Conceptions of Causation and Responsibility
Symbolic Comprehensions of Disorder
Social Movements and Civilizational Processes
Spaces and Times of Happiness and Despair

James H. Billington, author of *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture* and director of the Wilson Center in Washington, will be Distinguished Speaker at the Ninth Annual Meeting of the ISCSC(US).

Inquiries concerning membership in the Society should be addressed to the Secretary-Treasurer, Neil B. Weissman, Department of History, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA 17013, U.S.A.

FELLOWSHIPS

The Gustave E. von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies at UCLA was established in 1957 to stimulate, coordinate, and integrate instruction, training, and research in the languages and those humanities and social sciences essential to an understanding of the Middle Eastern background. Currently the following departments are involved in providing Near Eastern area coverage: Anthropology, Art, Geography, History, Music, Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, Political Science, and Sociology. The region includes the territory from the Balkans and Asia Minor to the Indus (necessitating the cultivation of Urdu), Africa north of the Sahara (imposing the study of Berber), Ethiopia and the Turkic-speaking sections of Central Asia. In terms of language instruction this geographic coverage leads to the cultivation — apart from Arabic, Persian, and Turkish as the central languages of the area — of Hebrew, Amharic, Armenian, and Georgian. With the recent addition of courses in the Ancient Near East, our chronological coverage is complete. A graduate program in archaeology provides opportunities for practice in the field as well as the theoretical courses.

In addition to the undergraduate program leading to a B.A. in Near Eastern Studies, the Center offers, on the graduate level, the interdisciplinary M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Islamic Studies. Specialized degrees in history, political science and sociology with the Near East as one of the fields of concentration are also available. The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures provides instruction in Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, and Turkish language and literature with the B.A. degree available in Hebrew, Arabic, Ancient Near Eastern Civilizations and Archaeology. On the graduate level the student may pursue specialized studies in a combination of these languages and obtain the M.A. or Ph.D. degree.

The program is supported by rapidly increasing library acquisitions, now in excess of 100,000 volumes, of both source materials and secondary literature dealing with the area. Complementing it is the university's Arabic-Persian-Turkish-Armenian manuscript collection (approximately 8,500 items), the second largest of its kind on the North American continent. The Collection of the Museum of Cultural History is rich in material from the Near East and includes archaeological and ethnographical art objects from all periods of Near Eastern development.

Through the Center, the University of California, Los Angeles, participates in a number of interuniversity activities in this country and abroad, such as the American Research Center in Egypt (Cairo), the American Research Institute in Turkey (Istanbul), the American Institute for Iranian Studies (Tehran), the American Institute for

Yemeni Studies, the Center for the Study of Arabic Abroad (Cairo), and the Society for the Study of Islamic Philosophy and Science (New York).

A limited number of research assistantships are available on a competitive basis for graduate students working towards the M.A. or Ph.D. degree in Islamic Studies. Applications for any academic year must be on file at the Center by February 1 of the year for which the candidate is applying. In addition, NDEA Title VI Area and Language Fellowships are awarded by the Center; applications for the following academic year are due December 31. Awards are announced by April 15.

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Publications received will be mentioned (books, if not reviewed) in NUMEN.

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